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Subject: Transcript: Premier Wynne Remarks and Media Avail at Queen's Park (Sept 26)

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Energy content highlighted

PREMIER WYNNE REMARKS AND MEDIA AVAIL AT QUEEN'S PARK

Date: September 26, 2017

Length: 14:27 minutes

Speaker(s): Premier Kathleen Wynne; Yasir Naqvi, Attorney General

Remarks

PREMIER KATHLEEN WYNNE: Good morning everybody. Thanks for being here. We just wrapped up our fall summit with the GTHA mayors and this is the sixth time that I've had the opportunity to sit with the mayors and to talk about issues that are of real relevance to all of them. And it's always a helpful conversation and today we talked about three things. We talked about the preparations that are being made as we move to the implementation of the new cannabis protocols. The federal government's legalization of cannabis of course has implications for the province as we move to administer the rules. But the legalization of cannabis by the federal government also has implications for municipalities and that was the conversation today. We made it clear that we will work with municipalities. We are asking them for input on some of the enforcement issues. Later this fall there will be an enforcement summit that Minister Naqvi will lead and we will hear from them in more detail as they work with their administrations on some of the issues that they are concerned about. The challenges are complex - right from the siting of stores, to the enforcement in public spaces - and so we need to make sure that as resources flow to municipalities - which they will have to do - we want to make sure that they get into the right level of government. For example, that was one of the issues that was raised today; the upper tier and lower tier municipalities. So there was a fair bit of detail that we got into today and there will be more as we go down this road.

The second issue that we talked about was housing and the impact of the Fair Housing Plan on municipalities around the GTHA, and the—one of the issues that came up that I think is an interesting focus and that is the availability of provincial land. There were a number of comments from the mayors about their support for that notion; that provincial land would be available for building housing that is affordable, building rental housing, and so Minister Milczyn is going to work with municipalities on that front, and in fact, put out a call to the municipalities that if there is provincial land in their jurisdiction that they think they would like to work with the province on and work to see the development of, particularly rental housing but also affordable housing, then we want to know about that and to work with them.

And then the final issue that we talked about was the provincial challenge fund on reduction – or actually it's called the Municipal Challenge Fund – on projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. And Minister Ballard just gave information to the mayors that this exists, that we're looking forward to them; it's \$100-million and it's part of our commitment to make sure that all of the revenue from the cap-and-trade program flows into projects that are going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. And so there's a lot of opportunity there for municipalities. So, it was a great meeting

[Speaking French]

[Speaking English] I look forward to meeting with them in the New Year. I look forward to your questions.

Avail

Q.: [Inaudible] will cities get their costs covered, these new costs that they are going to incur; will they be covered by the tax revenue that's going to be coming from this legalization?

PREMIER WYNNE: So that's one of the questions; exactly what are the resources? One of the mayors said you know, will there be licensing fees that we'll have access to? Will there be the opportunity for municipalities to raise their own revenues? What will be the resources that will flow from the provincial level to the municipal level? And quite frankly those issues are not all worked out, but they raised them and so that's an important piece of this. The issues around zoning were raised as well. And so we need to work out exactly what those regimes will be, but I will say that there was a lot of support. In fact I think most of the mayors who spoke began by saying that they are supportive of the rules that we are putting in place.

Q.: Is there a need for Ottawa to maybe give you guys some clarity on how the taxation is going to work so that you guys can have some fiscal certainty on the money that—

PREMIER WYNNE: Definitely. What was interesting to me was the conversation with the municipalities with the province, it mirrors the conversation that we're having with the federal government in the sense that we don't have all the information that we need, there are issues around enforcement, there are issues around revenue, and those are all the things that we need more clarification from the federal government on so that we can be clear with the municipal level.

Q.: Premier, the attorney general has been very clear about the illegal pot shops, saying that there's—implying that a crackdown is coming. Are municipalities asking you for direction on that and what are you saying?

PREMIER WYNNE: So they did ask this morning on exactly what the expectation was. I'm going to let the minister speak to that.

YASIR NAQVI, ATTORNEY GENERAL: Thank you premier. I mean we've been very clear from the very beginning that these pot shops are illegal today and they will remain illegal once legalization takes place. The current federal legislation is absolutely clear that the only way you can purchase or sell medicinal marijuana is through online channel, through license producers. There is no legality to these pot stores today. And as we have announced we will have a control board mechanism by which cannabis will be sold in the province by retail store fronts and through online channel. We had a very good conversation. The, as the premier mentioned, the municipal leaders very much support our approach and they want to work with us in putting an end to these illegal source. And one of the ways that we want to explore how we can better coordinate our efforts is by hosting this enforcement summit this coming fall, working very closely with Minister Lalonde. On that we will bring our minister, municipal partners, our law enforcement partners, our police services so that we can determine, as one, as to what is the best way to make sure that these illegal stores are not in our communities.

Q.: Is there anything that we shouldn't expect that we shouldn't expect a crackdown on the stores before that summit in the fall? And where is that summit taking place?

NAQVI: Well, so we're working on the details of the summit and most likely it will take place in Greater Toronto Area for ease of convenience. You know the police services are taking this responsibility very seriously already and they, as you know, in cities like Toronto Ottawa and Hamilton, we have seen police enforcement. We wanted to make sure that we make it very clear as to what the regime will look like in Ontario when cannabis is legalized and that's why we've made it very clear. It is obviously up to the police to enforce the law and we have full confidence they will do so. If there are ways that we can work together more effectively, we want to learn those ways and find better ways of coordinate our efforts, see if there's any gaps, any other tools that we can make available to municipalities and our police services, and that's the purpose that the enforcement summit is going to fulfil so that we are working together.

PREMIER WYNNE: But let me just say, one mayor today said, you know as soon as one of these pot shops pops up it's shut down right away. So, you know, it varies municipality to municipality but it's already happening that-- I mean we can use crackdown or whatever word but it's already happening that where there's an illegal pot shop there's already action being taken.

Q.: Premier, I just wanted to ask you about the ad, the attack ad against you that the Conservative are running. It's got a fairly severe looking picture of you and—

PREMIER WYNNE: I have not seen it. I will just say I have heard about it, but I have not seen it.

Q.: Okay I could tell you a little bit about it.

PREMIER WYNNE: You were.

Q.: It says you are untrustworthy and that the Ontario Liberal party is corrupt. How do you feel about this kind of ad coming from the Conservatives?

PREMIER WYNNE: Well I -- you know I have intentionally not watched it because I really, I really have a lot of other things to do. You know it's really important to me that I focus on the work that is the core of my job. And that is like today meeting with municipal leaders to talk about the things that are very relevant to people's lives in our communities around the province; in this case around the GTHA. You know I just came back from Quebec where we had a really important opportunity to talk with our colleagues in Quebec about again, about issues that are of huge importance to each of our provinces; whether it's the relationship with the United States and our trade changes that we're concerned about or whether it is the role of central Canada in this country of ours. I mean those are issues that affect people's lives every single day. I've had the opportunity over the last number of weeks to meet with young people who are accessing free tuition. You know they're in college and university because of a decision that we made to change OSAP. I've also talked to some older people who didn't realize that they were eligible for free tuition. And so those are the things that I'm focused on. And you know if the opposition party is running nasty attack ads that's you know -- you'll have to ask them about that.

Q.: I did yesterday as well. So then I am going to ask you about your commitment from your party in terms of -- as that you are going to run -- are you going to not run attack ads against Patrick Brown? Are you going to also personally approve of the ads? I know you say you didn't watch this Conservative ad but....

PREMIER WYNNE: Well I do. Yeah so the ads that are run on my watch are ads that I know about and I approve. Look we're going into a political campaign. There will be contrasts that will be drawn between who I am and who the opposition leaders are and what we are doing and what they will do. And that's part of the political process. But I will be focusing on the work that we're doing. I'll be focusing on the benefits of the policies that we are putting in place for the people of this province. And I will be focusing on what more we can do because I'm not under any illusion that that we're finished. You know I'm not under any illusion that we have that fair province that we really need if everyone is going to have the opportunity that they are capable of and that they deserve. So I'll be focusing on the benefits of what we're doing and what more we can do to help people in their lives.

Q.: Are you still thinking about suing him for libel; suing Patrick Brown for libel? I don't think he has apologized for the -- for your lawyer [Inaudible]...

PREMIER WYNNE: Well again I think our lawyers are looking at all of that and I think we're in a period now where I hope that -- you know I would hope that Patrick Brown would step forward and would you know be truthful about what actually happened in Sudbury.

Q.: Premier [Inaudible] for the Fair Hydro Plan. The documents the NDP got through an FOI suggest that the Cabinet Office gave the initial go ahead on this.

PREMIER WYNNE: So there are many, many ads that are run through government about government policies; you know whether it is giving people information about the OSAP changes. I just mentioned that I have met you know older people in the last little while who didn't know that they were eligible for free tuition. And we're going to be putting in place free medication for kids from 0 till their 25th birthday. We need to make sure that families know about that. In the same way with hydro; you know the OESP, the programs for low income Ontarians, we need to make sure that people know how to access the programs that we put in place in this province. That's what all of that advertising is about.

Q.: Premier should schools be air conditioned? Should schools be air conditioned [Inaudible]?

PREMIER WYNNE: It's very hot right now. I recognize that. And there have been -- you know there has been money that has flowed to school boards where decisions are made about changes in their buildings. I recognize it's really hot and you know I hope that teachers and kids are okay; that there are fans and that they're able to deal with it. Thanks everybody. Merci.

PREMIER WYNNE: [Speaking French]

Q.: [Speaking French]

PREMIER WYNNE: [Speaking French]