

Message

From: Navigator Limited [info=navltd.com@mail111.atl91.mcsv.net]
on behalf of Navigator Limited [info@navltd.com]
Sent: 2017-03-02 1:25:52 PM
To: Terry Young [/O=IMO/OU=MSX1/cn=Recipients/cn=Terry Young]
Subject: Queen's Park Update - Thursday, March 2, 2017

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Thursday, March 2, 2017

In the News

This morning, Premier **Kathleen Wynne** and Energy Minister **Glenn Thibeault** announced Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan which reduces hydro rates by a further 17 per cent and caps further rate increases to inflation. The government will extend the amortization period for the loans that funded earlier energy procurement and infrastructure. Further, the government will take on and expand the Ontario Electricity Support Program, expand the Rural or Remote Electricity Rate Protection Benefit and Charge (RRRP), make the Affordability Fund accessible to Local Distribution Companies, expand the Industrial Conservation Initiative and provide a 100 per cent credit of the delivery line for on-reserve First Nation customers. The plan will cost Queen's Park an additional \$1.83 billion a year.

In the announcement, Premier **Kathleen Wynne** hailed the plan as the "largest cut to electricity rates in the history of Ontario" while acknowledging that standing government policy was "wrong". Defending the extended payment period, the Premier said that while "over time, it will cost a bit more...[and] take longer to pay off", the plan was "fairer because it doesn't ask this generation of hydro customers alone to pay the freight for everyone before and after". The Premier also reaffirmed the government's commitment to balance the budget.

PC Energy Critic **Todd Smith** and NDP Energy Critic **Peter Tabuns** criticized the plan and accused the government of passing the bills to future generations. In the legislature, PC Leader **Patrick Brown** said that the moves do not go far enough, since the government has not committed to suspend "bad contracts" for green energy that the province does not need. NDP Deputy Leader **Jagmeet Singh** also called on the government to restore Hydro One to full public ownership.

Meanwhile, a poll found that support for the governing Ontario Liberals is dwindling in the

former suburban areas of Toronto. While the Liberals register overall 43 per cent overall support in Toronto, their support is concentrated in the downtown core and North York, with the Progressive Conservatives leading the Liberals in Etobicoke and the PCs and NDP leading the Liberals in Scarborough. Meanwhile, the federal Liberals enjoy more than 60 per cent support throughout the city.

Opinion Highlights

- Liberals will raise your taxes to offset hydro costs. (Patrick Brown, *Toronto Sun*)
 - Kathleen Wynne tries to outrun her own 'suboptimal outcomes'. (Kelly McParland, *National Post*)
 - Kathleen Wynne's sleazy, desperate hydro ploy to fool Ontarians is, well, brilliant. (Kevin Libin, *Financial Post*)
 - Will Kathleen Wynne's last-ditch hydro fix just add to the mess? (Adam Radwanski, *The Globe and Mail*)
 - Note to Queen's Park: Policy doesn't have to be complicated to be good. (John Michael McGrath, *TVO*)
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Question Period Highlights (March 2)

Electricity prices

- PC Leader **Patrick Brown** noted that the Premier admitted policy mistakes six times, mistakes which total 42 billion dollars. **Brown** expressed reservations that the policies announced this morning would increase taxes in the future.
- Premier **Kathleen Wynne** blamed governments over the past 50 years for neglecting investment in infrastructure that has necessitated the longer amortization period.

Wynne promised that all consumers, particularly rural and remote ratepayers, will see savings to their hydro bill that are sustainable and long-term solutions.

Energy contracts

- PC Leader **Patrick Brown** argued that the announcement was "another Liberal shell game" that does not go to the root causes of high hydro costs Brown posited that the Premier has no plan to halt the signing of low-value energy contracts and speculated had an incentive to do so since most contractors were Liberal donors.
- Premier **Kathleen Wynne** said that the government looked into contract renegotiations but found that it would be expensive and take time, while also putting a "chill" on business investment in Ontario.
- Energy Minister **Glenn Thibeault** added that the cancellation of green energy contracts will increase litigation costs for the government.

Hydro One

- NDP Deputy Leader **Jagmeet Singh** accused the Premier of breaking promises by selling off Hydro One. **Singh** then listed the broken promises by the government.
- Premier **Kathleen Wynne** contrasted Singh's claims by noting she promised to reduce the cost of electricity by 8% and that was what happened. She then touted the government's rate announcement this morning.
- **Singh** accused the Premier of chasing a quick political fix with the new electricity policy that will cost Ontario in the long run. Singh urged the government to fix the systemic problems within the hydro system.
- Energy Minister **Glenn Thibeault** said that over 800,000 households will benefit from the government's policies in the rural and remote parts of Ontario. **Thibeault** argued that the morning announcement does in fact introduce substantial structural changes to electricity that will lower rates.

Today in the Legislature

**Government
Business**

Bill 27 - An Act to reduce the regulatory burden on business, to enact various new Acts and to make other amendments and repeals.

**Private Members'
Business**

Bill 97 - An Act to proclaim Magna Carta Day.

Introduced by Julia Munro
(PC - York—Simcoe)

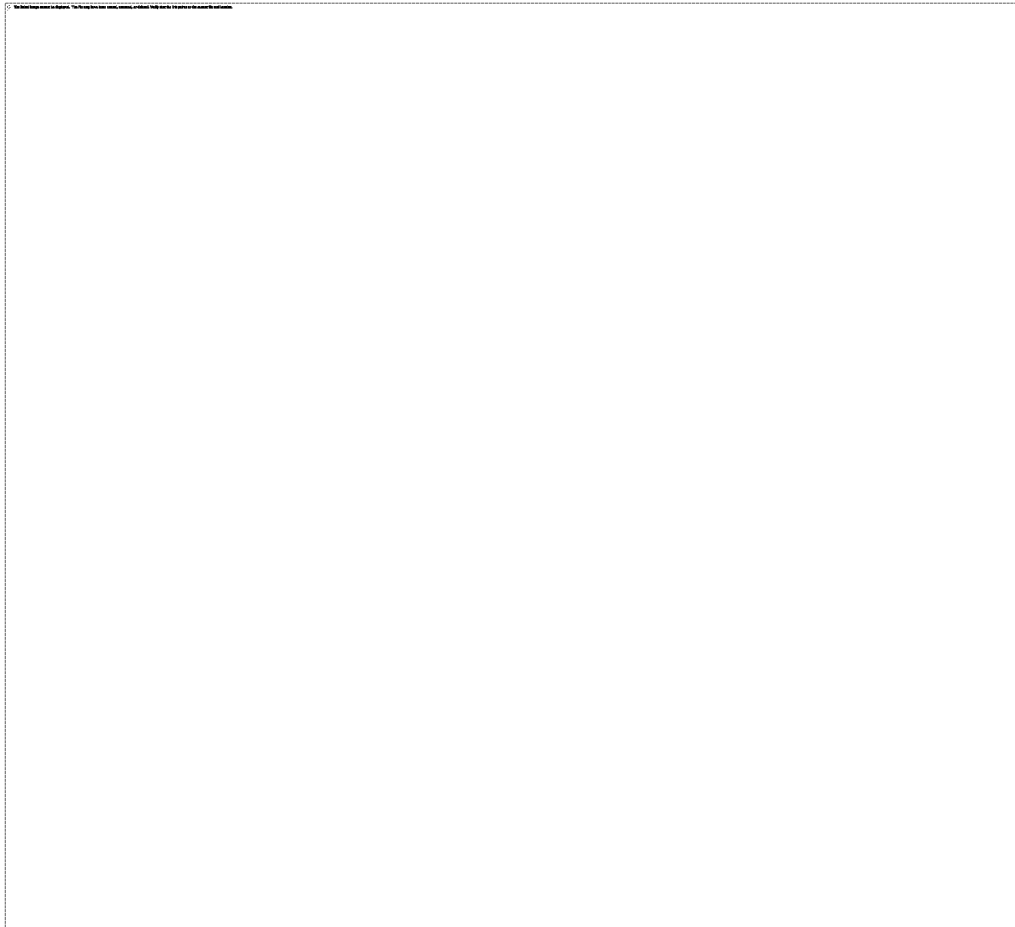
Bill 98- An Act to amend the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 to limit funding of child care and early years programs and services to not-for-profit corporations. Introduced by Catherine Fife (NDP - Kitchener—Waterloo)

**Committee
Meetings**

9:00 a.m.; 2:00 p.m. -

Standing Committee on Justice Policy will meet to consider Bill 39, An Act to amend the Aggregate Resources Act and the Mining Act.

Social Media Snapshot



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Events at a Glance

Thursday, March 9, 2017

The challenges preventing Ontario from recapturing its heft as the country's economic powerhouse: Leader of the Opposition Patrick Brown

Time: 11:30 a.m. registration; lunch and speech 12:00 p.m.

Location: Toronto Region Board of Trade, 1 First Canadian Place, Toronto ON - 4th Floor Ballroom

RSVP: <https://www.bot.com/EventDetails.aspx?meetingid={68D9D4E4-549C-E611-BDD2-005056914667}>

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Ontario's Energy Future: The Hon. Glenn Thibeault will lay out priorities for the road ahead as the government prepares for the launch of a renewed Long Term Energy Plan

Time: 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Location: Arcadian Court, 401 Bay Street, Toronto

RSVP: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/oea-speaker-series-the-hon-glenn-thibeault-ontarios-energy-future-tickets-31891969740>

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan and the First Cap and Trade Auction: The Hon. Glen Murray, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change

Time: 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Location: One King West Hotel and Residence, 1 King West, Toronto

RSVP: <http://economicclub.ca/events/display/the-hon-glen-murray-minister-of-environment-and-climate-change-to-address-the-ec>

Queen's Park Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Question Period	Question Period Caucus Meeting	Question Period Cabinet Meeting	Question Period Private Members' Business	No Business

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Our mailing address is:

Navigator Ltd.
121 King Street West, Suite 1810
Box 100
Toronto, Ontario M5H 3T9
Canada

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