

Message

From: Navigator Limited [info=navltd.com@mail142.suw14.mcdlv.net]
on behalf of Navigator Limited [info@navltd.com]
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To: Terry Young [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group
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Subject: Queen's Park Update - Tuesday, April 4, 2017

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Tuesday, April 4, 2017

In the News

Yesterday, Environment and Climate Change Minister **Glen Murray** announced that the government's first cap-and-trade auction on March 22 generated \$472 million in revenue. The auction sold all available emissions allowances, but Minister **Murray** warned that the real test of cap-and-trade legislation will be whether the success of the sales lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Currently, most large emitters have been granted free allowances until 2020, to discourage these companies from moving out of the province.

Environment and Climate Change Minister **Glen Murray** also defended the government's move to absorb motorists' fees for Ontario's Drive Clean program, saying the program is essential to reduce vehicle emissions. PC MPP for Huron—Bruce **Lisa Thompson** said the emissions test program is outdated and should be cancelled, and the \$60 million allotted to paying for the tests should be put to better use.

Today, the Ontario Autism Coalition will release a report on children with autism that will request more mandatory special education courses in teachers' colleges, more funds devoted to educational assistants and a new autism demonstration school for children requiring intensive support. The 34-page report was written with the input of 70 autistic teens and young adults from the coalition's youth advisory committee, and comes two months after elementary school teachers in Ontario identified a dire need for more support in schools. Education Minister **Mitzie Hunter** committed the government to delivering support that children with autism need.

Today, PC Leader **Patrick Brown** will introduce a motion to compel Treasury Board President **Liz Sandals** to appear before a legislative committee to justify the millions of dollars in salaries paid to executives last year. Minister **Sandals** defended the salaries, saying that the Liberals froze executive salaries in 2012, and that appropriate salaries function as an incentive to retain talent in the public sector.

Yesterday, PC Leader **Patrick Brown** confirmed that the official opposition's policy on hydro prices will "fix the structural mess [the government] created" instead of borrowing more, but will not be released until next year. According to the *Toronto Star*, the PCs promised to reveal their plan to lower energy costs by the spring, but yesterday **Brown** explained that the new policy will be included in the party's election platform in 2018. Energy Minister **Glenn Thibeault** slammed **Brown** for criticizing the Liberals' on hydro without offering any alternative plan.

Meanwhile, NDP Leader **Andrea Horwath** called Brown's decision to hold off on a hydro plan

"disappointing" and alleged that Ontarians do not know the PC Leader despite a 17 year political career.

National Post reported today that Ontario's salary disclosures revealed that women only make up 25 per cent of civil servants who earn more than \$100,000. The number is an improvement from 24 per cent in 2015 and 21 per cent in 2014. NDP MPP for Toronto—Danforth **Peter Tabuns** criticized the government for maintaining a gender-pay gap despite being in power for 14 years, while PC MPP for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock **Laurie Scott** noted that the analysis revealed that a gender-pay gap exists in the public sector in addition to the private sector. A spokesperson for Treasury Board President **Liz Sandals** acknowledged there was more work to be done, but noted that the mean salary difference between men and women dropped to 12.5 per cent in 2016 from 15.8 per cent in 2006.

Opinion Highlights

- With a major report coming soon, how will police oversight change in Ontario? (Tyler Dawson, *Ottawa Citizen*)
 - How Wynne's hydro disaster could have been avoided. (Editorial Board, *Toronto Sun*)
 - Will Trump-style politics 'Make Ontario Great Again?' (Martin Regg Cohn, *Toronto Star*)
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Question Period Highlights (April 4)

Special needs education

- PC Leader **Patrick Brown** referenced a report by the Ontario Autism Coalition identifying that 79 per cent of school boards do not have enough money for special

needs. **Brown** asked the government to commit to a review of the special education funding formula.

- Education Minister **Mitzie Hunter** touted the government's \$2.7 billion dollar investment in special needs education, which has increased by 70 per cent. **Hunter** then accused **Brown** of "saying no" to a National Autism Strategy.
- **Brown** noted that **Hunter** did not answer the question about a review to the special education formula.
- Deputy Premier **Deb Matthews** noted that **Brown**, as a federal Member of Parliament, voted against a National Autism Strategy.

Hydro One

- NDP Leader **Andrea Horwath** noted Hydro One's application for a rate increase. **Horwath** noted that the rate hike request comes while hydro costs are skyrocketing.
- Energy Minister **Glenn Thibeault** touted the government's Fair Hydro Plan that will bring down rates by 25 per cent, including more protections for rural consumers.
- **Horwath** noted the \$4.5 million salary for Hydro One's CEO due to the government's partial privatization of the utility. **Horwath** implored the government to stop the selloff of Hydro One.
- **Thibeault** noted that the partial privatization has led to several improvements at Hydro One, including e-billing. **Thibeault** then criticized **Horwath** for having an obsession with Hydro One's partial privatization not rooted in the facts.

Gender-pay gap

- NDP Leader **Andrea Horwath** stated that the government prioritizes a "few people at the top" while forgetting regular people, while noting that the gender-pay gap still exists under the Liberal government. **Horwath** noted that the government has also refused to raise minimum wage, despite growing executive compensation for Hydro One by 300 per cent.
 - Labour Minister **Kevin Flynn** noted that the government has consulted public sector unions and other stakeholders to close gender wage gap. **Flynn** noted that the government ensured that minimum wage kept in pace with inflation.
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Today in the Legislature

Government Business

Bill 87 - An Act to implement health measures and measures relating to seniors by enacting, amending or repealing various statutes, second reading.

Bill 59 - An Act to enact a new Act with respect to home inspections and to amend various Acts with respect to financial services and consumer protection, third reading.

Private Members' Business

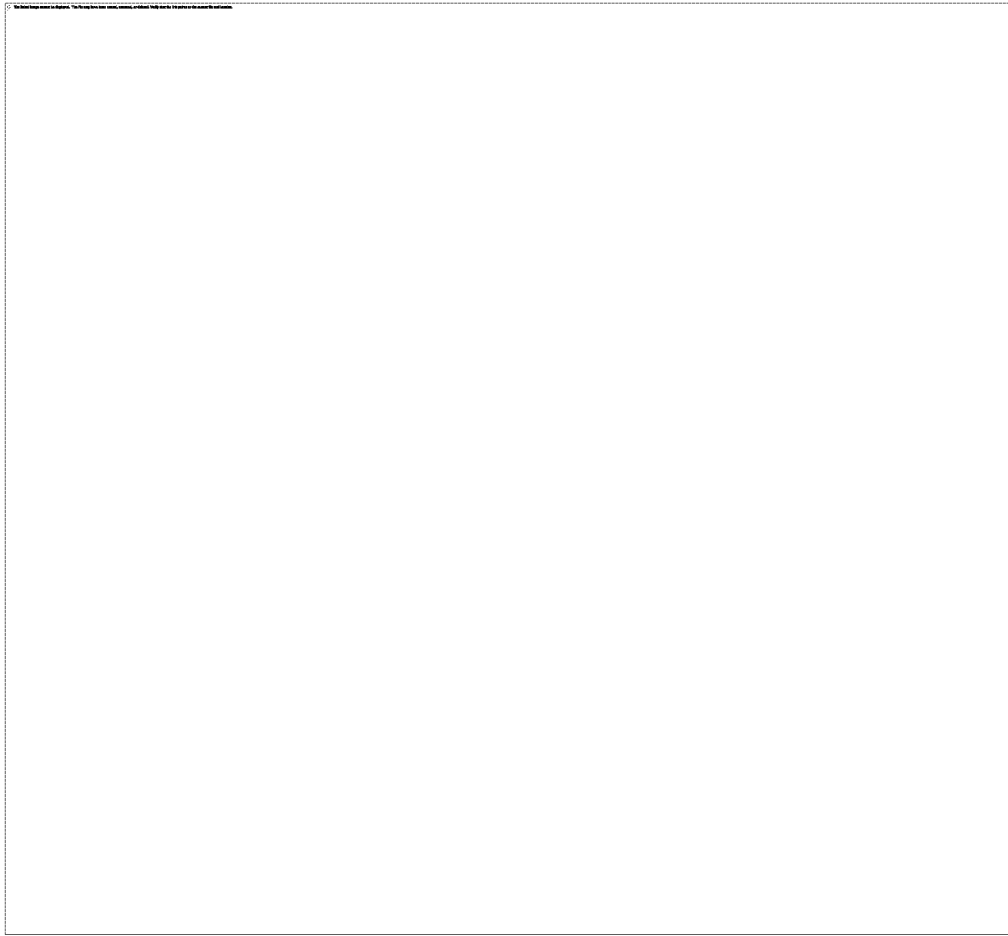
No private member's business.

Committee Meetings

9:00 a.m. - Standing Committee on Government Agencies will meet to consider intended appointments

4:00 p.m. - Standing Committee on Social Policy will meet to consider Bill 68, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to municipalities.

Social Media Snapshot



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Events at a Glance

Thursday, April 13, 2017

Finance Minister Charles Sousa will outline the government's Path to Balance.

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location: Arcadian Court, 401 Bay Street, Toronto

RSVP: <https://www.empireclub.org/events/honourable-charles-sousa-ontarios-minister-finance/>

Monday, May 29, 2017

Health Minister Eric Hoskins will outline the government's vision for transforming health care.

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location: Canadian Room, Fairmont Royal York Hotel, 100 Front Street West, Toronto

RSVP: <https://www.empireclub.org/events/honourable-eric-hoskins/>

Queen's Park Schedule

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