

Message

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To: Terry Young [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group
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Subject: Queen's Park Update - Wednesday, April 5, 2017

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Wednesday, April 5, 2017

In the News

Yesterday, Premier **Kathleen Wynne** suggested that the province might back Toronto's request to tax hotels and short-term rentals "in the near future". The Premier made the comments after Mayor John Tory asked the province to approve the move, in addition to match federal funding for infrastructure in a 14-page document addressed to Finance Minister **Charles Sousa**. The city hopes to generate \$5 million in revenue from the hotel and short-term accommodation tax, which could be implemented by the end of the year with provincial blessing.

Meanwhile, Premier **Kathleen Wynne** confirmed that rent control legislation is "coming soon", while expressing doubt from developers and economists that rent control will discourage construction of new rental properties. The Premier argued that the same stakeholders have been making the same claims since 2003 without any results. Currently, rent increase caps only apply to residences built before November 1991. NDP Leader **Andrea Horwath** noted that the NDP has tabled a private member's bill to apply rent control to all rental residences that the government could choose to support at its discretion.

This week, Liberal MPP for Davenport **Cristina Martins** will introduce a private member's bill to require provincial judges complete training on handling sexual assault cases before being appointed. Two weeks ago, PC MPP for Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock **Laurie Scott** tabled a similar request to Attorney General **Yasir Naqvi**. At the time, Minister **Naqvi** and Premier **Kathleen Wynne** expressed reservations about interfering with judicial independence. NDP MPP for London West **Peggy Sattler** supported more sexual assault sensitivity training across all professions, but emphasized that the training should be grounded in research and evidence.

This morning, Deputy Premier and Digital Government Minister **Deb Matthews** was at Shopify's Toronto offices to launch Code for Canada, a new not-for-profit organization that will develop digital solutions to make government services more user-friendly. Code for Canada will be part of a network of "Code for" organizations operating worldwide that facilitate interaction with government through digital technologies.

Yesterday, NDP Labour Critic **Cindy Forster** proposed legislation to make it easier for workers to unionize and ensure access to binding arbitration during initial collective bargaining. **Forster's** proposal would reinstate Card Check Certification, which would allow

unionization once the majority of workers sign on to union membership cards without a company-wide secret ballot. In addition, the proposal would ensure access to binding arbitration within 60 days if the parties are unable to reach a collective agreement. Labour Minister **Kevin Flynn** called the proposal "a bit opportunistic", and noted that a comprehensive report will be released by mid-May. In response, **Forster** said that the government is taking too long to act while the "quality of work across the province has declined at a significant pace".

Opinion Highlights

- Conflict inevitable between John Tory and Kathleen Wynne. (Marcus Gee, *The Globe and Mail*)
 - Patrick Brown's support for carbon tax causing rift between Ontario and federal Tories. (David Reevely, *Ottawa Citizen*)
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Question Period Highlights (April 5)

Cap-and-trade

- PC Leader **Patrick Brown** noted that the Ontario Chamber of Commerce has raised concerns about cap-and-trade and the organization is asking for more supports under the new carbon pricing system.
- Premier **Kathleen Wynne** defended the cap-and-trade system as an investment in the sustainable future for Ontario's children. The Premier criticized Brown's plan for a carbon tax and argued that Brown's plan would be unaffordable and ineffective.
- **Brown** criticized the Premier for making "assertions" that "are not based on reality". **Brown** noted that the cap-and-trade regime imports pollution from California and Quebec, instead of reducing emissions in Ontario, which does not help Ontario's children.

- Environment Minister **Glen Murray** noted that PC Deputy Leader **Steve Clark** endorsed Kevin O'Leary for federal Conservative leader, despite the latter's opposition to a carbon tax. Minister Murray said that **Clark's** endorsement pits **Clark** against **Brown's** support for a carbon tax.

Hydro One

- PC Leader **Patrick Brown** asked if the government still controls Hydro One after selling off 30 per cent of the utility. **Brown** asked the government to rein in the "offensive" executive salaries at the company, which **Brown** argued is out of sync with the rest of Canada.
- Finance Minister **Charles Sousa** said that the government will remain a majority shareholder of Hydro One, but defended appropriate executive compensation for the utility to remain competitive.
- NDP Leader **Andrea Horwath** noted that Hydro One has applied for a 20 per cent rate hike while its CEO obtained a 500 per cent pay raise. **Horwath** implored the government to stop the sell-off of Hydro One.
- Premier **Kathleen Wynne** noted that the government's Fair Hydro Plan will drop hydro rates by at least 25 per cent, with more savings for rural and remote ratepayers.

Rent control

- NDP Leader **Andrea Horwath** noted that yesterday, the Premier acknowledged the loophole on rent increase caps for buildings built after 1991. **Horwath** asked the Premier to name a date for when reforms will be tabled in the legislature.
- Premier **Kathleen Wynne** said that she agreed with **Horwath** that rent control was necessary, and committed to bring forth a package of reforms to address the issue.

Today in the Legislature

**Government
Business**

Bill 65 - An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act in respect of speed limits in municipalities and other matters, second reading.

Bill 96 - An Act to enact the Human Trafficking Awareness Day Act, 2017 and the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act, 2017, second reading.

**Private Members'
Business**

No private members' business.

**Committee
Meetings**

9:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. - **Standing Committee on Public Accounts** will meet to consider Large Community Hospital Operations (Section 3.08, 2016 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario)

1:00 p.m. - **Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly** will meet pursuant to Standing Order 108(g)

4:00 p.m. - **Standing Committee on General Government** will meet to consider a notice of motion filed pursuant to Standing Order 126

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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/>

Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Queen's Park Press Gallery Spring Fling

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Hart House, University of Toronto

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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