

Queen's Park Today – Daily Report April 30, 2018

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Quotation of the day

“This is the biggest campaign that Ontario New Democrats have ever run. And we are running to win.”

NDP leader Andrea Horwath officially launched the New Democrat Party's election campaign in Hamilton Sunday.

Today at Queen's Park

On the schedule

The House will reconvene at 10:30 a.m. for question period.

In the afternoon, the House will continue second reading debate on **Bill 53**, Government Contract Wages Act.

When debate on **Bill 53** is complete, MPPs will begin third reading debate on **Bill 6**, Correctional Services Transformation Act, which wrapped up hearings at the Standing Committee on Justice Policy on April 26. Pursuant to a time allocation, **Bill 6** will only be debated for three hours at third reading.

Including today, there are seven sessional days remaining before the writ drops on May 9. There are 39 days left until Ontario's 42nd general election on June 7, 2018.

Leader watch

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** attended community events in Toronto over the weekend, including the 2018 Khalsa Day Celebration at Nathan Phillips Square on Sunday afternoon. In the evening, Wynne attended the #TorontoStrong vigil alongside Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau** and Toronto Mayor **John Tory** in North York on Sunday evening.

After officially kicking off the NDP campaign in Hamilton on Sunday morning, **Andrea Horwath** joined Premier Wynne in delivering remarks at the 2018 Khalsa Day. The NDP leader also attended the #TorontoStrong vigil.

PC leader **Doug Ford** also attended the 2018 Khalsa Day parade and the #TorontoStrong vigil.

Committees this week

The Standing Committee on General Government will meet on Monday for clause-by-clause consideration of **Bill 8**, Access to Consumer Credit Reports and Elevator Availability Act.

The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs will meet on Thursday for clause-by-clause consideration of **Bill 31**, Plan for Care and Opportunity Act, the government's budget bill.

PCs promise up to \$6,750 in annual child care rebates, 12% off hydro bills

Parents will be eligible for a child care tax rebate for up to 75 per cent of their annual child care costs, if the Tories form the next government.

Announced by PC MPP **Laurie Scott** in Pickering on Saturday, the Progressive Conservatives' \$389 million plan will allow eligible households to apply for an Ontario Childcare Rebate for up to \$6,750 in annual expenses. Unlike the Liberal plan that only covers preschool-aged children who attend licensed child care centres, the PCs say their plan will cover various forms of care for children up to age 15.

"Our plan will cover any form of childcare that works for individual families and their unique situations," Scott said in a [release](#). "Licensed care, independent care, babysitters, nannies and after-school programs will all be covered."

The Tory rebate would operate on a sliding scale depending on a family's income. Low-income families will see up to 75 per cent of their child care costs covered, while families earning more than \$150,000 annually can apply for no more than a 26 per cent rebate. The PC plan would take effect in 2019 if leader **Doug Ford** is elected premier.

The Liberals are offering free childcare for all kids from two-and-a-half until they begin kindergarten. The New Democrats, meanwhile, are proposing free child care at public daycare centres for families earning \$40,000 annually or less as well as \$12-per-day child care for other low- and middle-income families.

Saturday's child care announcement was the second major PC campaign plank unveiled in as many days. On Friday, Ford [announced](#) the Tories' plan to lower hydro rates by 12 per cent using Ontario's Hydro One dividends to cover some electricity generating costs.

This \$800 million shift from the rate base to the tax base would save an average family \$14 a month on their hydro bills, the Tories argue, on top of the 25 per cent reduction announced by the government last year as part of their Fair Hydro Plan.

Hydro One dividends currently flow into general revenue; Ford said nothing in his energy announcement about making up the \$800 million shortfall.

The Tories' hydro plan, like the child care announcement, is nearly identical to those proposed by former PC leader **Patrick Brown** in the People's Guarantee.

Topics of conversation

- **Andrew Lawton**, the PC candidate for London West who was acclaimed by party leader **Doug Ford** last weekend, has a history of making troubling comments on issues such as Islam, climate change, men's rights and a spurious connection between immigration and rape.
 - *Press Progress* listened to back episodes of Lawton's *Rebel Media* podcast from 2015 to 2017 and found examples of the candidate's far-right thinking. Climate change is "a lot of nonsense"; men "no longer feel they can be men" he said as part of a larger episode on the "pussification of the West"; and German women "deserve" to be raped by Muslim men who are allowed into the country by Germany's open immigration policy.
- In the wake of PC leader **Doug Ford**'s move to acclaim 11 candidates in ridings across the province in mid-April, disaffected Tories are considering leaving the PCs behind. According to *TVO*'s **Steve Paikin**, long-time PC party members, including Springwater Township councillor **Sandy McConkey**, are considering throwing their electoral support behind the Trillium Party.
- According to Elections Ontario data compiled by CBC, the PCs have fundraised more than the Liberals, New Democrats and Green Party combined thus far in 2018. At \$945,970, the PCs are well ahead of the Liberals at \$488,542, the NDP at \$317,305 and the Greens at \$128,376.
- Online polling from Leger released Friday shows NDP leader **Andrea Horwath** is the top challenger to PC leader **Doug Ford** in the race to become the next premier of Ontario. Twenty-five per cent of respondents said Ford would be the best premier, while 20 per cent chose Horwath and only 12 per cent said they support Liberal leader **Kathleen Wynne**. When asked what party leader has what it takes to lead the province, 35 per cent chose Horwath to Ford's 30 per cent.
 - In terms of votes, the PCs still poll highest at 43 per cent, compared to 26 per cent for the New Democrats and Liberals.

- TVO CEO **Lisa de Wilde** issued a statement Friday saying the public broadcaster's independent investigation into claims of sexual harassment against *The Agenda* host **Steve Paikin** have concluded with no indication that Paikin violated TVO policies. "The investigator found that the allegations were not substantiated," the broadcaster said.
 - In February, former Toronto mayoral candidate **Sarah Thomson** alleged that Paikin propositioned her during a meeting in 2010 and banned her from appearing on *The Agenda* after she refused him. The investigator found no truth to Thomson's claims.
- Hamilton-area NDP MPP **Paul Miller** allegedly ordered his non-partisan, unionized office staff to work on political matters, in order to help guarantee his re-election.
 - "You are working in a political office," Miller said in a 2016 recording obtained by *Hamilton Community News*. "It's supposed to be a non-partisan thing, but really isn't as we all know." Later in the recording, Miller said "If I lose the election we are all out of a job. I understand the riding staff shouldn't be distracting from what you are doing here. It is a sideshow. But with all due respect, it is interlocked with this office. You can't separate the constituency from [the] riding association."

Today's events

April 30 at 9:30 a.m. — Toronto

Environment and Climate Change Minister **Chris Ballard** will update reporters on the province's waste management targets at Queen's Park.

April 30 at 9:30 a.m. — Toronto

NDP leader **Andrea Horwath** will make a campaign announcement regarding cancer care at Gilda's Club.

April 30 at 9:30 a.m. — Toronto

Liberal MPP **Mike Colle**, on behalf of Infrastructure Minister **Bob Chiarelli**, will make an announcement at the Lawrence Heights Community Centre.

April 30 at 10 a.m. — Toronto

The Financial Accountability Office will release two reports online. The first looks at the "Effectiveness of Ontario's Business Support Programs." The second is a "Financial Analysis of the OLG's Gaming Expansion and Sale of the Greater Toronto Area Gaming Bundle."

April 30 at 10:15 a.m. — Orléans

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** will make an announcement in the atrium of École secondaire publique Louis-Riel.

April 30 at 10:30 a.m. — Whitby

PC leader **Doug Ford** will make an announcement at a private residence.

April 30 at 11 a.m. — Orléans

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** will participate in a roundtable discussion with the Assemblée de la Francophonie Ontarienne. The roundtable is billed as an Ontario Liberal Party event.

April 30 at 1 p.m. — Vineland

Environment and Climate Change Minister **Chris Ballard** will make an announcement at the Vineland Estates Winery.

April 30 at 2:45 p.m. — Hawkesbury

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** will make an announcement at La Résidence Prescott et Russell.

April 30 beginning at 3 p.m. — Oshawa

PC leader **Doug Ford** will visit a Canadian Mental Health Association location and the Oshawa Military and Industrial Museum.

April 30 at 6 p.m. — Oshawa

PC leader **Doug Ford** will hold a rally with supporters at the Tosca Banquet Hall and Conference Centre.

Appointments and nominations

Ontario Liberal Party

- Lawyer and community activist **Jessica Spindler** was nominated Friday in a competitive race in Toronto—St. Paul's, the riding vacated by former health minister **Eric Hoskins**.
 - Premier **Kathleen Wynne** had previously considered using one of her five candidate acclamation slots to enlist health care consultant **Will Falk** to run in St. Paul's, but reconsidered after grassroots' backlash.
- Business leader and community volunteer **Safdar Hussain** won the Liberal nomination in Brampton Centre.
- Community volunteer **Carlie Forsythe** was nominated to run for the Liberals in Elgin—Middlesex—London.

Ontario NDP

- NDP leader **Andrea Horwath** was acclaimed to run for the New Democrats in Hamilton Centre on Sunday afternoon.
- Labour activist **Michele McCleave-Kennedy** won the NDP nomination to run in Sault Ste. Marie.

- Rural schools advocate **Michelle Taylor** will represent the NDP in Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes.
- Local NDP organizer and freelance reporter **Marc Benoit** will seek the NDP nomination in Stormont--Dundas--South Glengarry.
- Norwich-area teacher **Tara King** will represent the NDP in Oxford.
- Corrections Officer **Glen Archer** won the NDP nomination in Kenora—Rainy River.



Funding announcements

The Truth Matters.

Increasing the use of Ontario biofuels
works for our economy and environment



Ministry of Housing

- Housing Minister **Peter Milczyn** announced \$60 million in funding Friday for the City of Toronto to offer developers incentives to build more affordable rental housing. It's part of a broader five-year, \$125 million program to rebate developers who build more complete communities.
 - Milczyn also announced that Dream, Tricon and Kilmer Group have been selected to turn two vacant lots in the West Don Lands into mixed-income rental homes for almost 1,500 families.

News briefs — Governmental

Ontario and Michigan sign trade, environmental MOU

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** and Michigan Governor **Rick Snyder** signed a memorandum of understanding Friday to commit both governments to fostering a more competitive business climate, encouraging tourism and protecting shared resources like the Great Lakes.

"Despite uncertainty at the national level, states and provinces like Ontario and Michigan continue to protect and deepen our productive, job-creating partnership," the leaders said in a joint statement. "The MOU we are signing today further strengthens our already robust trade and investment relationship and encourages new opportunities for collaboration and growth."

Ontario and Michigan are each jurisdiction's largest trading partner. In 2017, two-way trade between the two totalled \$84 billion, largely on the strength of closely integrated auto supply chains.

The Ontario PCs issued a statement saying Wynne could learn a lot about business competitiveness from Michigan, noting the state's six per cent corporate tax rate and low industrial hydro rates.

News briefs — Non-governmental

Horwath launches Ontario NDP's "biggest" campaign ever

NDP leader **Andrea Horwath** was in Hamilton Sunday afternoon to officially launch the New Democrats' campaign for Ontario's 42nd general election and to accept her party's nomination as the candidate for Hamilton Centre.

Surrounded by supporters, candidates and MPPs at a LiUNA Station, Horwath spoke about the party's promise to provide drug and dental coverage for all Ontarians, buy back Hydro One and improve seniors' care.

"This is the biggest campaign that Ontario New Democrats have ever run," Horwath said. "And we are running to win."

Horwath's 25-minute speech hit on all her common themes, from political cynicism to reminding voters they no longer have to settle for choosing between bad and worse. "It doesn't have to be this way," she said to applause, "and this is our time to change it."

A new premier will be elected on June 7, Horwath told the crowd, and the question now is who will replace **Kathleen Wynne**. "That choice has never been so clear," she said. PC leader **Doug Ford** "will cut billions of dollars from the things that matter most to families. He will cut our hospitals deeper. He will lay off more of our nurses and frontline health care workers."

Horwath said the only things keeping the PC leader out of the premier's office "is the people in this room."

On Sunday, Horwath told her supporters she's not playing to win more seats than last time but to win government outright, something the New Democrats have done only once in Ontario's history under **Bob Rae** in 1990.

"Ford and Wynne are battling over which is the worst premier. I am offering something completely different," she said. "I am offering the option of a better premier, one of hope, opportunity and vision for the future. That's change for the better, and it's exactly what Ontario needs."