

Queen's Park Today – Daily Report March 29, 2018

Today at Queen's Park.....	1
Today's events	3
Appointments and nominations	3
Budget response: Stakeholders	4

Quotation of the day

“The only good news in this budget for the people of Ontario is that this will be Kathleen Wynne’s last budget. The party with the taxpayer’s money is over; and for Ontario families, help is on the way.”

PC leader Doug Ford weighs in on the spring budget.

Today at Queen's Park

On the schedule

The House will reconvene at 9 a.m. to continue second reading debate on **Bill 6**, Correctional Services Transformation Act.

Often the budget bill is debated on the sessional day following its release, but not this year. Monday, the PCs tabled a reasoned amendment to the incoming budget bill that will prevent its debate for three sessional days.

Finance Minister **Charles Sousa**'s budget cannot be debated in the House until Wednesday, April 11, the third sessional day from today (next week is a constituency week). The budget bill must be passed within 12 sessional days of it being tabled, giving the government until April 25 to pass its economic blueprint.

Two motions and one bill will be debated during private member's business on Thursday afternoon:

- PC MPP **Toby Barrett** will put forward a motion calling on the government to commit to “reduce taxes where feasible, and not introduce any new provincial taxes or raise existing provincial taxes,” including personal income, business, corporate and carbon taxes.

- Liberal MPP **Lou Rinaldi** will put forward a motion calling on the government to expand broadband access, invest in infrastructure and develop natural resources while promoting “other key industries and services.”
- Liberal MPP **Sophie Kiwala** will put forward **Bill 26**, Fee Waivers (Photo Card and Birth Certificate), for debate. Kiwala’s bill waves the Service Ontario fee for those who can’t afford photo identification.

After voting on private member’s business, MPPs will return to second reading debate on **Bill 3**, Pay Transparency Act.

Wednesday’s debates and proceedings

On Tuesday, seven private member’s bills were introduced and granted first reading:

- PC MPP **Sylvia Jones’ Bill 23**, Aggregate Recycling Promotion, which prevents any public contract from rejecting a construction bid because recycled aggregate will be used.
- Liberal MPP **Yvan Baker’s Bill 24**, Pathways to Post-secondary Excellence Act, which would require the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario to collect and publish information about certain educational institutions.
- PC MPP **Randy Pettapiece’s Bill 25**, Rea and Walter Act (Truss and Lightweight Construction Identification), which would require a “truss identification emblem” be posted on buildings constructed of specific lightweight materials, as a fire safety measure.
- Liberal MPP **Sophie Kiwala’s Bill 26**, Fee Waivers (Photo Card and Birth Certificate), which waves photo ID card fees for Ontarians who cannot afford to pay for photo identification.
- Liberal MPP **Yvan Baker’s Bill 27**, Stop the Calls Act, which would prevent unsolicited sales calls related to certain products or services.
- Liberal MPP **Yvan Baker’s Bill 28**, What You See is What You Pay Act (Consumer Protection Amendment), which would require an all-inclusive cost for certain services be provided to consumers before purchase.
- Liberal MPP **Yvan Baker** reintroduced **Bill 29**, Combatting Eating Disorders in Ontario Act, which would require a warning label be added to photoshopped images used in advertising.

On Wednesday, NDP MPP **Paul Miller** introduced **Bill 30**, Ministry of Community and Social Services Amendment Act (Social Assistance Research Commission), which would establish the Social Assistance Research Commission to assist with determining new social assistance policies.

Finance Minister **Charles Sousa** introduced **Bill 31**, Plan for Care and Opportunity Act (Budget Measures).

In the Park

The Canadian Cancer Survivor Network is hosting its MPP breakfast Thursday morning.

Former PC leader **Patrick Brown** was at Queen's Park on Wednesday to watch the budget speech — his first appearance at the legislature since his ill-fated January press conference.

Today's events

March 29 at 11 a.m. — *Orangeville*

Green Party of Ontario leader **Mike Schreiner** will conclude his "Green Vision" Tour with a meet and greet at Pia's on Broadway.

March 29 at 12 p.m. — *Toronto*

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** will address the Economic Club of Canada following the tabling of Wednesday's budget by Finance Minister **Charles Sousa**.

Appointments and nominations

PC Party of Ontario

- PC leader **Doug Ford** announced that Official Opposition leader **Vic Fedeli** will return to his role as finance critic, while MPP **Lisa MacLeod** will serve as the Treasury Board critic and Anti-Racism Secretariat critic.
- A nomination meeting to determine who will run for the PCs in Cambridge has been set for April 14 in the Armenian Community Centre.

Ontario Liberal Party

- Following a competitive nomination race involving 1,700 party members, small business owner **Ibrahim Daniyal** was nominated to represent the Liberals in Pickering—Uxbridge.
- **Brenda Rhodes**, the executive director of the Bracebridge Chamber of Commerce, was nominated Wednesday to run for the Liberals in Parry Sound—Muskoka.
- **Benoit Mercier**, a teacher and the executive director of the French Catholic School Boards Association, was nominated Tuesday as Liberal candidate in Niagara Centre.

Ontario New Democratic Party

- Local union official **Judith Monteith-Farrell** won the nomination to run for the NDP in Thunder Bay—Atikokan.
- Immigrant rights activist **Saman Tabasinejad** has been selected to run for the NDP in Willowdale.

Budget response: Stakeholders

Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses

"The CFIB is disappointed that the provincial government missed another opportunity to directly offset the rising payroll costs for small business as a result of the recent minimum wage hike and labour reforms. Instead, the province has decided to embark on a pre-election spending spree, abandoning any spending restraint and fiscal discipline."

- **Plamen Petkov**, CFIB's Ontario vice president

CUPE Ontario

"After decades of cuts and ignoring people's needs, eleventh hour promises only feed voter cynicism, and that is really sad. There is no question there is some much needed investment for public services in this budget, but where has this government been for the past 15 years? We've been calling for these kind of investments for years, and, I'm sorry, but they're a decade late and several pounds short as my mother used to say."

- CUPE Ontario president **Fred Hahn**

Environmental Defence

"The new investment of \$52 million over three years into protecting the Great Lakes is especially welcome. Ontario has committed to fighting algae and protecting Lake Erie, including the recently released Canada-Ontario Lake Erie Action Plan. It's good to see some resources being put behind that commitment."

- Environmental Defence program director **Keith Brooks**

Green Party of Ontario

"The Liberals are now promising the moon in a politically motivated game to contrast with the Conservatives' planned cuts. People deserve better; they deserve leadership that doesn't make a wedge issue out their lives. People deserve a government that will be honest about the challenges we face."

- GPO leader **Mike Schreiner**

Ontario Chamber of Commerce

"The OCC is concerned with the precarious fiscal situation that many of the Government's new investments will create. While the near-term deficit is projected to be less than one percent of the GDP, this comes at a time when the economy is relatively strong. The budget also projects slower GDP growth on the horizon due to global factors."

- Ontario Chamber of Commerce

Ontario Health Coalition

"Today, public hospitals occupied a prominent place in the budget. Health coalitions have been campaigning doggedly to save local services and hospitals through more than a decade of devastating real-dollar budget and service cuts, and our work is starting to pay off. However, the longer-range plan is to drop the funding increases again to considerably below need. The coalition is asking all political parties to commit to 5.3% increases, multi-year funding, and a capacity plan to re-open beds and services to meet population need."

- *Ontario Health Coalition*

Ontario Real Estate Association

"When it comes to the budgets of Ontario families, housing is the biggest line item. In today's market, young people in particular are struggling to afford the Canadian dream of home ownership. Unfortunately, when it comes to making housing more affordable for young families, the 2018 Ontario budget is a missed opportunity. Young people looking for help to get out of mom and dad's basement didn't get any in today's budget."

- *OREA CEO Tim Hudak*

Ontario Undergraduate Student Association

The most important investment in this budget is a portion of the \$2.1 billion in mental health funding that will be dedicated to post-secondary students ... Budget 2018 also reiterates budgetary commitments to expand OSAP for students by substantially reducing expected parental and spousal contributions to the cost of education. These changes will increase the number of students benefiting from the OSAP Transformation."

- *Sophie Helpard, executive director, Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance*