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Subject: QP Newsletter: QP Briefing and Queen's Park Today - May 17

Attachments: Queen's Park Today- May 17.pdf; QP Briefing May 17.pdf

Good morning,

Please find attached the May 17, 2018 issues of QP Briefing and Queen's Park Today.

QP Briefing

From the opinion pages

- (pg. 4) The Star editorial board argues the Hydro One board has handed Ford a gift with its self-congratulatory pay raises.

Feature articles

- How Ford's election promises add up so far
 - (pg. 7) Ford has promised to end Ontario's cap-and-trade program, and not to implement the federal carbon tax backstop in its place, as Brown had intended to. He may end up in a court battle with the federal government over the issue but, assuming he succeeds, he would lose access to carbon market revenue of an estimated \$2 billion a year. At present, that money is to be spent on initiatives that lower Ontario's carbon footprint. Today, much of it goes to carbon-friendly infrastructure repairs, homes, hospitals and schools.
 - (pg. 8) Ford has pledged to reduce the average hydro bill by an additional 12 per cent, costing the province \$800 million a year. The government would rebate its portion of Hydro One dividends and move conservation programs from the rate base to the tax base, as well as abandon energy contracts where financially feasible. That's on top of keeping the costly borrowing scheme behind the Liberal government's Fair Hydro Plan, introduced last year, at least in the short term.
- Ford would axe hundreds of millions in cap-and-trade-funded programs
 - (pg. 10) Scrapping Ontario's cap-and-trade system and reducing the provincial fuel tax would yield the discount to the gas price cuts, he said. A senior Ford campaign official confirmed capping cap and trade means cancelling the programs it funds. Those include the four-year, \$900-million social and private housing retrofits program and a

\$200-million plan for eco-friendly school upgrades. A questions around how swiftly the programs would be cut and who would be impacted remain, however.

- (pg. 10) In 2017, carbon auctions raked in \$1.9 billion for the province, cash flow a Tory government would cut off along with the green retrofits and services it pays for.
- (pg. 11) Other spending commitments and tax and hydro rate cuts may hinder the PC plan to climb out of deficit, which Ford confirmed Wednesday a Tory regime would run in the first and possibly second year. “By the end of our term, we’ll have a balanced budget,” he added.
- (pg. 11) He repeated his claim he would stop the federal government from imposing a carbon tax after ditching cap and trade. Under federal law, any province without a carbon pricing scheme will become subject to Ottawa’s carbon tax.

Queen’s Park Today

Today on the campaign trail

- Ford to slash fuel taxes in bid to lower prices at the pump
 - (pg. 3) As part of the Tories’ pocketbook agenda, the PCs are proposing to reduce the provincial fuel tax on gasoline from 14.7 cents per litre to nine cents per litre. This will cost the provincial government \$1.19 billion in annual revenues.
 - (pg. 3) Ontario’s cap-and-trade program brought in \$1.9 billion last year, which combined with the \$1.2 billion fuel tax cut, would put a \$3.1 billion hole in the budget.

News from the campaign trail

- (pg. 6) In response to a Clean Air Alliance election questionnaire about nuclear power in Ontario, the New Democrats indicated their party is in favour of decommissioning the aging Pickering nuclear plant in August when its licence expires rather than extending its operating life until 2024, as the Liberals have planned. To replace the energy generating by Pickering nuclear, the NDP supports importing more hydroelectricity from Quebec.

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