

Message

From: Navigator Limited [info=navltd.com@mail237.atl81.rsgsv.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 - Week in Review: June 16, 2017

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Friday, June 16, 2017

In the news

On Wednesday, Ontario Progressive Conservative Leader **Patrick Brown** delivered more than 2,200 letters of protest to the Ontario Energy Board. The letters are in response to Hydro One's application to the Ontario Energy Board to increase electricity rates of the average customer by \$2 to \$3 a month each year over the next four years. Energy Minister **Glenn Thibeault** has assured Ontarians that the outcome of the application will not affect electricity rates for Hydro One customers.

On Thursday, Transportation Minister **Steven Del Duca** confirmed that the province will launch a feasibility study of hydrogen-powered passenger trains. The provincial government has decided to pursue this assessment, which would include public consultation and government research. The process of electrifying GO lines is included in the \$13.5 billion regional express rail program, that will introduce all-day, two-way GO service throughout the GTHA's regional rail network by 2025.

In an interview with the Toronto Sun, Premier **Kathleen Wynne** addressed rumours that she will call a snap provincial election before next year's fixed date. The premier assured that she has no intention of moving the date of the election, while confirming that she will lead the party into next year's vote. The interview also addressed the premier's relationship with Toronto Mayor **John Tory**, and the Liberal Fair Housing Plan.

The unionized workers of the LCBO are in a legal strike position starting June 26, unless a deal is made before then. The union is accusing the LCBO of leaving workers trapped in part-time positions. The LCBO disputes these allegations, saying wages are generous, and more than half of the part-time workers get more than 1,000 hours per year. Union president **Warren Thomas** acknowledged the government has introduced workplace legislation that would improve protections for part-time workers, calling on Premier **Kathleen Wynne** to put her money where her mouth is.

The Government of Ontario will have to pay \$56.78 million to the Canadian Union of Public Employees if workers ratify a deal to compensate them for the government violating their rights. The deal comes after a judge ruled the government substantially interfered with a meaningful collective bargaining, as Bill 115 froze wages and limited their ability to strike. The union says the money would be paid out over time to approximately 60,000 workers who were employed during the 2012-14.

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** and Minister of Education **Mitzi Hunter** announced the allocation of \$200 million to install energy-efficient building elements across Ontario Schools. The energy-efficient

elements include new windows, lights, and furnaces, and are aimed at improving student health and fighting climate change. The funding for this program comes from cap and trade proceeds, and is part of a \$1.4 billion investment to improve schools across the province.

In other news, the government has signed a deal which gives thousands of civil servants a 7.5 per cent raise over the next four years. Treasury Board President **Liz Sandals** said the contract negotiation was aimed at avoiding any strikes or interruptions to government services.

Opinion Highlights

- What Kathleen Wynne can learn from Donald Trump. (Martin Regg Cohn. *Toronto Star*)
- Wynne's Liberals have lost touch with reality. (Editorial Board. *Toronto Sun*)
- The Ontario Liberals just offered the unions such a sweet deal even the workers couldn't believe it. Kelly McParland. *National Post*)
- Ontario's \$15 minimum wage will have many layers of unintended consequences. (Howard Levitt. *Financial Post*)

Insights | Stop Criticizing, Start Committing

By John Gardiner

With the Ontario provincial election just one year away, opinion polls reveal that the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives are nearly tied. If the Progressive Conservatives plan to get ahead, they must start appealing to younger voters, and stop criticizing the Liberal Government.

Next year's election will mark the first under new leader Patrick Brown. Many Progressive

Conservatives are hopeful entering this election with a fresh candidate. Brown has promised that, under his leadership, the party will be more inclusive and diverse than it has ever been before.

Additionally, Brown has remained focused on promoting change in Ontario by removing the Liberals after 14 years in government. The strategy seems to be working. Since Brown has been in office, the Progressive Conservatives have won 5 by-elections.

As the election looms however, it is essential that Brown's political strategy changes to include more substantive promises dedicated to youth engagement - Brown must stop criticizing, and start committing.

Instead of encouraging people to support them, the PCs are focused on persuading people to not support the Liberals. Patrick Brown seems to be devoting his energy and resources into crucifying the Ontario Liberal Government's Fair Hydro Act, when he should be touting the benefits of his own electricity reform – if it existed.

According to a report by the Auditor General, the Fair Hydro Act will provide a short-term reduction of electricity prices, with long-term increases over the next 29 years. While this should discourage youth from supporting the Ontario Liberals, there is currently no alternative.

The challenge that sits before Brown and the Progressive Conservative Party will determine their success or failure in 2018. They must develop a plan that can triumph over the Liberal's success in the youth demographic, and truly create the inclusive and diverse party that Brown has promised.

In 2015, the Liberals introduced beer, wine, and ciders in grocery stores, and in 2016 promised free tuition for low-income students. Throughout their term they have also improved mental health and social services for youth. As the election season approaches, the Liberals aren't slowing down. The Liberals have recently introduced OHIP+, which provides free prescription medications for everyone 24 years and younger. They have raised the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and have provided funding for transformative technologies.

The Liberals have pursued plans specifically designed to appeal to young voters. Although Kathleen Wynne denies these are 2018 election tactics, securing this demographic is extremely advantageous for the party entering this election.

If they want to win in 2018, the Progressive Conservatives and Patrick Brown must rollout plans

designed to appeal to young voters, instead of merely criticizing Liberal accomplishments.

John Gardiner is an intern at Navigator Ltd.

Social Media Snapshot

Events at a Glance

Monday, June 19, 2017

The Honourable Michael Chan, Minister of International Trade, will speak about Ontario's trade agenda

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location: One King West Hotel, 1 King Street West, Toronto

RSVP: <https://www.empireclub.org/events/honourable-michael-chan-minister-international-trade/>

Queen's Park Schedule

The legislature has risen for the summer break.

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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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