John Bozzo

From:	John Bozzo
Sent:	September 12, 2016 12:33 PM
To:	Rosemarie Leclair; Peter Fraser; MaryAnne Aldred; Lynne Anderson
Cc:	Neil Brodie
Subject:	FW: Throne Speech Text

Full speech text is online in at the Newsroom now. Here is the link: https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2016/09/speech-from-the-throne.html

Also included full text below.

Speech from the Throne

A Balanced Plan to Build Ontario Up for Everyone

September 12, 2016 12:00 P.M.

Office of the Premier

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, ladies and gentlemen, people of Ontario:

As the representative of Her Majesty the Queen, it is my honour to open the second session of the 41st Parliament by delivering the Speech from the Throne.
I begin by acknowledging the rich and enduring history of Indigenous Peoples in Ontario.

At this sacred gathering place for many peoples of Turtle Island, the elected representatives of Ontarians assemble to help guide and shape the future of the province we share.

To show our respect for the history and contributions of Indigenous Peoples in Ontario, I give acknowledgment to the fact that we come together today on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations with special recognition to the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

Introduction

More than two years ago, your government received a mandate to build Ontario up.

Your government remains committed to building Ontario up in a way that helps you in your everyday lives .
By choosing to invest in better infrastructure , stronger pensions , improved skills training and

a competitive business climate, your government has made meaningful progress.

Over the last two years, Ontario's economy has grown by 6.1 per cent.

Last year, growth was double the national average.

In the first quarter of this year, our growth was faster than that of the United States and the G7.

Almost 600,000 net new jobs have been created since the depths of the last recession.

Unemployment this year has reached an eight-year low.

These statistics are heartening. But they don't tell the whole story.

Our economy remains in transition. The world grows ever more competitive. While many across our province are benefiting from growth, challenges remain.

Some have yet to share in Ontario's resurgence.

Your government's top priority will therefore remain job creation and economic growth — and to make sure that everyone shares in the prosperity we are building together.

Because good jobs and economic growth mean you can support your family and our communities can thrive.

A Balanced Plan to Build Ontario Up

Your government is committed to its balanced plan, which has helped to grow Ontario's economy.

It is a plan to strengthen our economic foundation in a way that benefits everyone.

It is a plan to build Ontario up in a way that is responsible and sustainable — both financially and environmentally.

Three years ago, your government recommitted to eliminating the deficit by 2017-18.

It will make good on this commitment.

Next year's budget will be a balanced budget.

Your government made a choice to not cut its way to balance.

It did not sacrifice the public services on which so many rely.

Nor did it increase the HST or increase personal income taxes for the middle class.

Instead, your government chose a balanced approach to eliminate the deficit.

Protecting our recovery.

Encouraging economic growth.

Ontario's debt-to-GDP ratio is levelling and will start to decline — a sign of economic strength and fiscal responsibility.

This will give businesses further confidence that the province's economic plan is working — and that Ontario is a good place to invest and create jobs.

With economic growth and a balanced budget, your government will continue to build Ontario up, investing in the things that matter most to you and that help you in your everyday life.

It will do this, first, by enhancing child care.

Every child deserves to have the best start in life.

Over the past three years, the government has helped to create 56,000 new licensed child care spaces.

Within the next five years, it will help to create another 100,000 spaces, so that working families can find quality, affordable care.

Your government will also make it easier for parents to find and use the services their children need, whether they are before-and-after-school programs, drop-in centres or more licensed child care spaces.

Community hubs are creating spaces for expanded child care and child and family support services, as well as helping to make it easier to access health, social, education, cultural and recreational programs and services that nurture community life.

Second, your government will continue to invest in education to help students achieve their full potential and successfully compete in a global economy.

Every person in Ontario deserves an excellent education, from kindergarten through to postsecondary.

Your government is strengthening what is already one of the best education systems in the world, working collaboratively with our partners across the education sector.

It will continue to invest to make the classroom and school experience a positive one for all students, teachers and staff.

It is building and renovating schools.

Today, more students are graduating from high school in our province than ever before.

Your government is committed to making sure students have the excellent literacy and numeracy skills they need to succeed.

To help students improve their mathematics skills, your government is implementing a renewed math strategy , including having up to three math lead teachers in all elementary schools.

It is also setting a goal for every young person to have at least one opportunity for experiential learning.

At the postsecondary level, your government is building new campuses and modernizing old labs — helping Ontario students to get the best possible start in their adult lives.

Your government believes that for the next generation to have more opportunities in life than their parents, an advanced education should be attainable for all who qualify, regardless of family income.

That's why it chose to create the new Ontario Student Grant.
It will help thousands of students obtain greater access to advanced education and have lower levels of student debt upon graduation.

For students from lower-income and many middle-income families, it would make the tuition portion of the average postsecondary experience absolutely free.

Your government will also continue to help young people find their way in the working world.

In the last three years, Ontario's Youth Jobs Strategy has created thousands of job opportunities.
Your government is also helping more young people to transform their good ideas into promising start-ups — through campus-linked accelerators, incubators and a range of support for entrepreneurs.
Third, your government will invest in skills training that aligns with the job market of today and tomorrow.
People who want to upgrade their skills should expect help from their employer and from government.

Your government will work with industry, unions and educators to develop new skills training projects, guided by the recommendations of the Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel.
These projects will help people gain the skills they need to get a good job and will ensure Ontario retains the competitive advantage of having a workforce with the skills employers want and need.

Fourth, your government will strengthen our health care system.
Every person in our province deserves high-quality public health care.

Ninety-four per cent of Ontarians now have a primary health care provider, such as a family doctor or nurse practitioner.

Since 2013, seven new hospitals have been built in five communities. Over the next five years, 18 more hospitals across Ontario will complete major renovations or rebuilds, and approximately 20 more major projects will get underway.
In 2014-15, there were over 2,200 more nurses employed in Ontario, thanks in large part to investments from your government.

Today, 170,000 more seniors can benefit from a program that reduces their out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs. And 30,000 more will qualify for this program every year.
These investments will make a real difference in the lives of the people you love, who require care.

Through its Indigenous Health Action Plan, your government will ensure that no segment of Ontario's population is left behind.
It believes that additional resources for health care should be directed where they will help patients most, at the front line — not only to the highest-billing physicians or highly paid administrators.

Your government recognizes that many of you are caring for parents and other family members who want

to stay at home as they grow older.
So it is helping families by adding an estimated 350,000 hours of nursing care and 1.3 million hours of personal support, enhancing home care for those who need it.
The wait times to see a specialist will be reduced further.
Personal support workers are getting the pay hike your government committed to and that they deserve.
And your government will deliver on its primary care guarantee — connecting a family doctor or nurse practitioner to everyone who wants one.
Fifth, your government will invest in roads, transit and modern infrastructure, as part of the largest infrastructure investment in the province's history — about $160 billion over 12 years.
New and upgraded transportation infrastructure is essential to improve the quality of our communities and your quality of life, every day.

Over the next five years, about 5,000 kilometres of highways will be built or repaved — and more than 750 bridges will be built, repaired or rebuilt.
About 2,400 kilometres of these highways and 200 of these bridges will be in Northern Ontario.

Your government will continue to work with First Nations and other partners to move forward with greater access to the Ring of Fire and remote First Nation communities.

In urban areas, your government is investing in more than 350 kilometres of new rapid transit over the next decade.
Light Rapid Transit systems will be built in Waterloo, Hamilton, Mississauga, Ottawa and Toronto.

The GO system will be transformed with Regional Express Rail, which will quadruple the number of weekly trips from about 1,500 to nearly 6,000.

This means fewer emissions and a better commuter experience, even as Ontario's population increases.

Sixth, your government will continue building a competitive business environment, driven increasingly by innovative, low-carbon industries that support growing the economy and creating good jobs — your government's number-one priority.
So it will work to attract new businesses and the good jobs they bring.

The Premier and ministers will continue leading trade missions to priority markets around the world.
And build on the Ontario advantage with the Business Growth Initiative.
The Red Tape Challenge will continue to help businesses save time and money.
Your government will work with businesses that have the greatest growth prospects, helping them develop the tools they need to win new business at home or overseas.

It will help farmers meet the Premier's agri-food challenge with dedicated trade missions and new

measures to reduce their energy costs.
With the Jobs and Prosperity Fund, the province is building important strategic partnerships with job-creating businesses.
With farmers and processors. Foresters and programmers. Entrepreneurs and manufacturers.

These partnerships mean good, well-paying jobs here in Ontario.

The Jobs and Prosperity Fund has helped strengthen Ontario's key sectors, including the automotive industry — which employs tens of thousands of highly skilled Ontario workers.

And now, these workers have the opportunity to help invent the cars of the future — connected, autonomous cars and electric vehicles.
Your government will partner with manufacturers and automakers to attract new mandates and the next generation of advanced manufacturing and engineering talent.

By building an innovative, low-carbon and low-tax business environment, Ontario is attracting new investments from around the world.
Ontario has established itself as a leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and embracing the opportunities of a low-carbon economy.
Closing Ontario's coal-fired electricity plants remains North America's single-largest and most effective climate-change initiative — ever.

Important investments have made Ontario's electricity system clean and reliable, and have created good jobs.
Ontario's leadership helped support the agreement the world reached this past December at the Paris Climate Conference.

In Paris and here at home, your government worked in partnership with Canada's new Prime Minister and his team to make real progress on measures to combat climate change.

Ontario recently signed a joint declaration with Québec and Mexico, committing to working together to fight climate change and drive progress on carbon markets as Mexico pilots a cap and trade system.
Next year, Ontario's new cap and trade program will begin delivering benefits.
Cap and trade proceeds will be transparently invested in greenhouse gas reduction projects and incentives that will help Ontario households and businesses further reduce emissions.

Through the choices your government is making, Ontario will continue to fight climate change and grow the economy.

Seventh, your government will continue to play a leadership role to improve your retirement income security .

You deserve to look forward to the future with confidence, knowing you can retire with dignity.

For years, Ontario has been fighting for a solution to the coming crisis in retirement security.

Without action, many of today's workers would be facing a retirement defined by financial insecurity and worry.

Your government made a choice to take a national leadership role on this issue.

Then it worked to achieve consensus.

And Canada's finance ministers reached an agreement to bolster the Canada Pension Plan — to pay out more in benefits as a reward for a lifetime of hard work.

Your government will continue to work with its federal and provincial partners to ensure the CPP delivers a better retirement for the people of Ontario.

Eighth, your government will deliver additional relief on electricity bills.
Over the course of the past decade, Ontario electricity ratepayers have helped cover the costs associated with removing dirty coal-fired generation from our electricity system.

And while these investments have resulted in increased costs associated with generation, they have also created savings of more than $4 billion a year in health and other costs associated with smog and pollution from coal-fired generation.

Your government has been dedicated to reducing electricity costs wherever possible, while maintaining reliability for all consumers.

It renegotiated the Green Energy Investment Agreement, reducing contract costs by $3.7 billion.
Plans to extend the operation of the Pickering nuclear generating stations are expected to save customers as much as $600 million.
The introduction of the Large Renewable Procurement process, annual renewable energy price reviews and revised procurement schedules are expected to reduce costs by a further $4.1 billion as compared to previous forecasts.
Your government has removed the Debt Retirement Charge from residential electricity bills, made electricity more affordable for low-income families through the Ontario Electricity Support Program and is investing over $2.6 billion between 2015 and 2020 to help homeowners and businesses reduce energy use to save money.
Despite these efforts, you continue to face electricity cost increases above the level of inflation.

Whether in Kenora, Sudbury, Belleville, London or Barrie, your government has listened to and has heard your concerns. It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets.

It will therefore act on an idea it has heard from many individuals and groups.

Your government will introduce legislation that would rebate — directly on consumers' residential electricity bills — an amount equal to the provincial portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax, an eight per cent savings.
The rebate would go into effect on January 1, 2017.

Small businesses would also receive the rebate.

Additionally, in recognition of the unique and special circumstances associated with the electricity cost-of-service for rural ratepayers, the existing rural support program would be significantly enhanced to provide even more on-bill savings for Ontario's eligible rural customers.
Eligible rural customers would receive these additional savings, which would result in an on-bill monthly saving of about 20 per cent — approximately $45 a month.

Your government also intends to implement new measures to ensure that Ontario commercial and industrial ratepayers can also benefit from lower electricity costs.

Since 2011, the Industrial Conservation Initiative has encouraged large electricity users — primarily large industrial customers — to take on-site steps to shift consumption away from peak periods and lower their electricity costs by up to one third.

To benefit more businesses, your government will expand eligibility for the Industrial Conservation Initiative by lowering the threshold for participation and broadening participation to all sectors.
At the same time, conservation programs delivered by Local Distribution Companies, supported by the Independent Electricity System Operator, will continue to provide significant programs tailored to specific business classes and needs.

When fully implemented, participating industrial customers will be able to find cost savings of up to 34 per cent, depending on their ability to reduce peak electricity consumption.

With these proposed measures, your government will deliver significant on-bill savings for all electricity customers.

In addition to introducing legislation to provide relief on electricity bills, your government will move forward this session with other legislative priorities.

This week, your government intends to reintroduce election finance reform legislation, with all the amendments agreed to at the committee stage prior to the prorogation of the legislature. It also intends to move amendments during the committee stage of the bill to prohibit MPPs in all parties from attending fundraising events.

Your government will also reintroduce, this fall, all other government bills that were before the legislature prior to prorogation, so that debate on them can continue.

New legislation your government intends to introduce includes measures to strengthen Ontario's health care and education systems, ensure parental recognition and regulate home inspectors.

Conclusion

As this new session begins, Ontario stands strong within the Canadian federation.

Our next provincial budget will be in balance.

Our economy is growing.

Good jobs are being created.

Your government is actively working with the new federal government to deliver real benefits for Ontarians, such as stronger pensions and renewed infrastructure for our communities.

It will continue to work in partnership with Indigenous Peoples — to develop economic projects, to connect more reserves to the electricity grid, to provide access to clean drinking water and to create culturally appropriate education systems and public services.

It will invest in all regions of our province, including to help unlock the tremendous mineral potential of Northern Ontario.

The choices your government has made to develop its balanced plan are working.

Meaningful progress is being made.

A renewed sense of energy and confidence can be felt in our cities and towns, in all parts of our province.

Many Ontario families are already seeing the benefits.

As your government continues to build Ontario up, more will feel an increased sense of security.

Your government believes that government exists to do the things we cannot do alone.

It exists to be a force for good in all our lives — every day and in every corner of this beautiful province we call home.

Together, we will achieve the promise of an even brighter future for all.

Thank you. Merci. Meegwetch.

--

Jeff Blay

Communications and Digital Coordinator

595 Bay St. Suite 1202 | Toronto, ON, Canada | M5G 2C2 **Main:** 416-586-1474 ext 8336 **F:** 416-586-1480 **C:** 1-289.241.5114 **E:** **jblay@enterprisecanada.com** **W:** www.enterprisecanada.com Twitter: @JeffBlay LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/JeffBlay

---

From: Jeff Blay
Date: Monday, September 12, 2016 at 12:09 PM
To: John Bozzo
Cc: Karen Evans, Sylvia Kovesfalvi
Subject: The Star Piece on Throne Speech

Here is The Star's piece in full. Sent this to my team as well.

Wynne announces 8 per cent HST cut from hydro bills in throne speech
Robert Benzie
Toronto Star
https://www.thestar.com/news/queenspark/2016/09/12/wynne-announces-8-per-cent-hst-cut-from-hydro-bills-in-throne-speech.html

Electricity ratepayers will no longer be charged the 8-per-cent provincial portion of the harmonized sales tax on their hydro bills, Premier Kathleen Wynne's government has announced.

In a bid to jolt their flagging popularity, Wynne's Liberals delivered a consumer-friendly speech from the throne Monday that also promised 100,000 new child-care spaces over the next five years.

"Whether in Kenora, Sudbury, Belleville, London, or Barrie, your government has listened to and has heard your concerns," said the speech, which was read in the Legislature by Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

"It recognizes that the cost of electricity is now stretching family budgets," the speech continued.

Eliminating the 8-per-cent provincial share of the 13-per-cent HST as of Jan. 1 will save the average household $130 a year.

Many rural ratepayers, who cannot take advantage of the inexpensive natural gas for heating that urban Ontarians can, will receive an additional $540 annually.

While that rebate will cost the treasury about $1 billion a year, the Liberals insist they are on track to balance the books in the 2017-18 budget expected for March.

"Ontario's economy is still in transition, but our recovery is firmly track," Wynne said in a statement.

"While many are benefitting from the growth we've achieved, others have yet to share in Ontario's resurgence," the premier said.

The Liberals, who will mark their 13th anniversary in power next month, are smarting from the loss of the Scarborough-Rouge River byelection to the Progressive Conservatives on Sept. 1.

Mindful that Ontarians head to the polls in spring 2018, Wynne is desperate to give her majority Grits a reboot.

"Our government understands the challenges people face and shares their concerns," she said, vowing to deliver "real benefits and more inclusive growth that will help more people in their everyday lives."

That "everyday" theme permeated nearly every one of the throne speech's 17 pages.

"With economic growth and a balanced budget, your government will continue to build Ontario up, investing in the things that matter most to you and that help in your everyday life," said the address, entitled "A Balanced Plan to Build Ontario Up for Everyone."

"It will do that, first, by enhancing child care."

Building upon the 56,000 new daycare spaces in the past three years, the Liberals will fund an additional 100,000 over the next five.

"Your government will also make it easier for parents to find and use the services their children need, whether they are before-and-after school programs, drop-in centres or more licensed child care spaces."

When the government announced it would ban day care wait list fees that range from $20 to $200 as of Sept. 1, child-care activists said Wynne needed to create more spaces so new parents wouldn't face a mad scramble to find spots for their kids.

Competition for spaces is tight, particularly in Toronto, where there are spots for just 21 per cent of children under the age of 5. Ontario now spends more than $1 billion a year on 350,000 licensed day care spaces.

Stinging over the recent Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) tests that found half of Ontario's Grade 6 students failed to meet the provincial mathematics standard this year, the government plans to emphasize math skills.

"To help students improve their mathematics skills, your government is implementing a renewed math strategy, including having up to three math lead teachers in all elementary schools."

The falling EQAO scores — 58 per cent of Grade Six students met the standard in 2012 — has been blamed on kids' anxiety over math and teachers' lack of proficiency in the subject.

Beyond math, the government is "also setting a goal for every young person to have at least one opportunity for experiential learning."

Pocketbook issues such as hydro and daycare dominated the speech.

The Liberals remain committed to selling the Hydro One transmission utility to bankroll public transit and roads and bridges.

The government's carbon-pricing scheme to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change, which will cost the average household $13 extra a month starting in January, is still on track.

Progressive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown, who attended Tory MPP Raymond Cho's swearing-in earlier Monday, and NDP Leader Andrea Horwath will offer their critiques of the government's plan later in the afternoon.

Both have been urging the Liberals to tackle soaring hydro prices; Horwath has been pushing for the scrapping of the HST from bills since 2010.

Ontario Public Service Employees' Union president Warren (Smokey) Thomas didn't wait to hear the speech to blast it; he said in a news release that Wynne's government needs "the boot, not a reboot."

"After two years of lurching from mistake to mistake, the Liberals don't need to 'refresh their brand.' They need to call an election," said Thomas.

"Kathleen Wynne's sudden interest in the needs of everyday Ontarians is all about her political survival, nothing more."

All government legislation on the order paper when the House was prorogued Thursday will be reintroduced, starting on Tuesday.

The first bill will be the campaign finance reform law sparked by a Toronto Star series last March.

Under the legislation, corporate and union donations to political parties will be banned, MPPs and candidates will be forbidden from attending party fundraisers, and contribution limits will be reduced to $1,200 from $9,975.

The new law will introduce public subsidies of the major political parties by giving them $2.71 for every vote they received in the 2014 election.

Starting in January, annual payments will be $5.06 million for the Liberals, $4.09 million for the Conservatives, $3.1 million for the New Democrats, and $630,000 for the Greens.

--

Jeff Blay
Communications and Digital Coordinator

Enterprise CANADA

595 Bay St. Suite 1202 | Toronto, ON, Canada | M5G 2C2 **Main:** 416-586-1474 ext 8336 **F:** 416-586-1480 **C:** 1-289.241.5114 **E:** **jblay@enterprisecanada.com** **W:** www.enterprisecanada.com Twitter: @JeffBlay LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/JeffBlay