Infomart Newsletters

From:	Infomart Newsletters
Sent:	March 29, 2018 8:04 AM
To:	Rosemarie Leclair
Subject:	Morning News Clippings - Thursday, March 29, 2018

View in Browser

Morning News Clippings

powered by: infomart

Date: Thursday, March 29, 2018
Edited by: Paul Crawford (Paul.Crawford@oeb.ca)

Contact Editor

Clippings Summary

News - 7 Results

OPG says Pickering accident wouldn't mirror Fukushima

Pickering News Advertiser - Wed Mar 28 2018
Tone: Positive
Ad Value: $436
Reach: 51400 **Page:** 1

PICKERING - Pickering Nuclear's deputy site vice president gave a spring update to council recently. Steve Gregoris said the current performance at Pickering Nuclear Generating Station is the best in the station's history. He noted ...

This bold pre-election budget will leave bitter deficit aftertaste; ONTARIO BUDGET 2018 coverage, A16-19

Toronto Star - Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Martin Regg Cohn

Ad Value: $18,157
Reach: 361323 **Page:** A1

Given up for dead, Ontario's Liberals have given birth to a belatedly bold child care budget as they nurse dreams of an electoral renaissance. Queen's Park has delivered the most ambitious pre-election blueprint in recent memory, pushing the ...

Ontario Green leader visits Perth as part of pre-election provincial tour

Smiths Falls Record News - Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Desmond Devoy

Ad Value: $612
Reach: 11289 **Page:** A4

Ontario Green Party leader Mike Schreiner paid a visit to Perth during a pre-election campaign-style swing through the province. And yes, he's taking to the open road in a Prius. "We'd love to do all **electric**," he said during ...

Sunshine List shows province's top earners in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville

Carleton Place Almonte Canadian Gazette - Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $516
Reach: 12079 **Page:** A2

The **Ontario** government published its annual Sunshine List of people in the province earning more than $100,000 last year. At the top of the list is the **Ontario Power Generation** executive, CEO Jeffrey ...

Martin Regg Cohn: Ontario's child care budget delivers bold pre-election blueprint - at a cost

thestar.com - Wed Mar 28 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Martin Regg Cohn
Reach: 999000

Given up for dead, Ontario's Liberals have given birth to a belatedly bold child care budget as they nurse dreams of an electoral renaissance. Queen's Park has delivered the most ambitious pre-election blueprint(...

Don't believe the Ontario polls

Ottawa Citizen - Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Alistair Hensler

Ad Value: $1,545
Reach: 114846 **Page:** A9

Re: **Ontario** election will challenge the pollsters, March 23. Mohammed Adam evoked the memory of John Diefenbaker's observation about an unfavourable poll: "Polls are for dogs!" In the world of politics, any polls prior to election day ...

London Hydro wins Customer Excellence Award - London | Globalnews.ca

globalnews.ca - Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

London Hydro won the Customer Excellence Award at the Electricity Distributors Association gala in Toronto on Monday.

Clippings Summary

Full Articles

OPG says Pickering accident wouldn't mirror Fukushima

Pickering News Advertiser - Wed Mar 28 2018
Tone: Positive
Ad Value: $436
Reach: 51400 **Page:** 1

PICKERING - Pickering Nuclear's deputy site vice president gave a spring update to council recently.

Steve Gregoris said the current performance at Pickering Nuclear Generating Station is the best in the station's history.

He noted **OPG** is seeking relicencing for Pickering to 2028, to cover continued operations until end of 2024, and allow for safe storage activities such as removal of fuel and water.

Hearings are scheduled for April 4 in **Ottawa**, and June 26 to 28 in Clarington. Gregoris said the deadline for written intervention, or a request to make an oral intervention is May 7, and to visit **opg**.com for more information.

He said continued operations to 2024 would reduce greenhouse **gas** emissions by an estimated 17 million tonnes - the equivalent of removing 3.4 million cars from **Ontario**'s roads.

Ward 2 **regional** Coun. Bill McLean asked about the likelihood of an accident.

"The likelihood is very low," said Gregoris. "I can't say the likelihood is zero but what I can say is we would not have an event of that severity. It would be arrested earlier and we would not see the same (disaster) as we saw with Fukushima."

Ward 1 city Coun. Maurice Brenner asked about **rate** increases to customers. Gregoris assured him there will be no **rate** increases above inflation going forward.

Back to Top

This bold pre-election budget will leave bitter deficit aftertaste; ONTARIO BUDGET 2018 coverage, A16-19

Toronto Star - Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Martin Regg Cohn

Ad Value: $18,157
Reach: 361323 **Page:** A1

Given up for dead, **Ontario**'s Liberals have given birth to a belatedly bold child care budget as they nurse dreams of an electoral renaissance.

Queen's Park has delivered the most ambitious pre-election blueprint in recent memory, pushing the envelope on deficit spending to rewrite the **rules** for free daycare - while bankrolling expanded pharmacare, home care, hospital care and mental health care.

But there is a price to be paid for all this caring - sharing the burden with a seemingly bottomless bottom line: $6 billion-plus annual deficits in coming years, with more borrowings piled onto our accumulated debt of more than $325 billion.

All to be paid off by future generations - notably those kids newly enrolled in child care.

But if we could ask the next generation, a couple of decades from now, if it was a wise investment - more precisely, if they were worth spending the money on - how would they answer?

Would they blame this budget for the debt overhang? Or credit it for investing in daycare that gave them an early start on childhood education, and allowed parents to get back on the job, while easing looming labour market shortages from a declining birth **rate** and those stay-at-home mothers?

It's a big bet. Now you see a balanced budget, now you don't.

Premier Kathleen Wynne and Finance Minister Charles Sousa have made their choice. Now voters get to decide whether this child care (and other-kinds-of-care) budget dies an early death after the June 7 election.

With the campaign kick-off just six weeks away, Ontarians will have their say: roll back daycare, pharmacare, home care if Doug Ford's opposition Progressive Conservatives take **power**; or roll on with Wynne's Liberals, perhaps in concert with Andrea Horwath's New Democrats.

Before making that decision, voters will have to make sense of a 308-page bittersweet budget brimming with election sweeteners and weighed down with a bitter deficit aftertaste.

And since most people won't wade through the document's fine print, they will be heavily influenced by outsized rhetoric from politicians: Sousa's spin, versus Ford's fire-breathing rhetoric, while Horwath insists she can simultaneously fight taxes and foster denticare.

The first question might well be: Can we afford universal child care?

A better question might be: Can we afford not to have free daycare?

After all, the government doesn't make parents pay a daily user fee to send their kids to all-day kindergarten, so why create a deterrent for pre-K?

But the over-arching question is: Why now?

Annual budgets don't just take account of the economic cycle; they are also tailored to the electoral cycle. The intersection of these two cycles makes this a double-barrelled budget.

Sousa argued with a straight face that "these are not election-cycle decisions we are making." But he could hardly claim the economic cycle forced his hand, given that **Ontario**'s unemployment **rate** is at historic lows - 5.5 per cent and holding - while economic growth has been remarkably robust in recent years.

To their credit, the Liberals understood that in good economic times, they could and should whittle down a deficit hangover of nearly $20 billion in the aftermath of the 2008-10 economic crisis, finally bringing the budget back to balance in the current fiscal year. So what prompted the fastest deficit U-turn in history for next year's budget?

No, not an economic downturn, but an electoral downturn.

It is an axiom of politics holds that voters are rarely rattled by deficit financing, because they are conditioned to getting something for nothing - albeit something enduring is preferable to something ephemeral (like tax cuts).

All three major parties have plunged the province into political - as opposed to economic - deficits while in government. Interestingly, the Tories were already planning a sizeable deficit in their election platform released last November so as to bankroll their promised tax cuts; that gap could grow given Ford's vow, since becoming leader, to forego billions in carbon tax revenues.

If he wins on June 7, Ford could then claim to have shredded two election documents from two parties - first his own Tory platform, followed by the liberal budget. Just watch him.

In this budget, and the last couple, the Liberals have put forward the beginnings of bold policy prescriptions and smart social programs that were long overdue - free child care, free pharmacare, free tuition - but not all the borrowing adds up.

After launching pharmacare for young people (under age 25) in last year's budget, this year's budget expands free drugs to seniors by eliminating co-payments and deductibles. Is that the best use of hundreds of millions of dollars in government spending, given that today's seniors are in a better position to afford those (capped) fees than, say children who lack access to denticare? Of course not, but seniors are a powerful voting bloc, and they turn out on election day.

And don't forget last year's decision to subsidize rising **hydro** bills (remortgaging **rates** through a longer amortization period). The borrowing was done off the government's books, on the backs of **Ontario Power Generation**, adding to the overall debt burden; the reduced rhetoric over **hydro** is proof of how politics prevails over economics.

It's all part of the good, the bad and the ugly of borrowing. And hedging budgetary bets in an election year.

Martin Regg Cohn is a columnist based in **Toronto** covering **Ontario** politics. Follow him on Twitter: @reggcohn

Back to Top

EMC

Ontario Green leader visits Perth as part of pre-election provincial tour

Smiths Falls Record News · Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Desmond Devoy

Ad Value: $612
Reach: 11289 **Page:** A4

Ontario Green Party leader Mike Schreiner paid a visit to Perth during a pre-election campaign-style swing through the province.

And yes, he's taking to the open road in a Prius.

"We'd love to do all **electric**," he said during an interview with The Perth Courier, during his stop at Café Bean in Perth on the morning of Monday, March 26 - his 37th interview, by his count, during his 2,500-kilometre tour of the province, taking in 20 communities in nine days. "(But) a **hybrid** was the way to go," considering the distance they had to travel.

The Greens, internationally, have been making inroads, including seeing the election of a Left-Green Party coalition prime minister in Iceland last year. The party has also formed governments in fairly conservative German states, and, closer to home, they have representatives in legislatures in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. But the biggest change for the movement has seen the British Columbia Greens propping up the NDP government in Victoria thanks to a supply-and-confidence deal.

"That Green wave is coming to **Ontario**," Schreiner promised. **Ontario** voters, he said, are "dissatisfied with the established party running the province." As for the main opposition Progressive Conservatives, "they can't even govern themselves," he charged, with a thinly veiled attack that new leader Doug Ford is a "Trump-style extremist." In short, "people are not happy with the status quo."

Schreiner said that he wanted to paint his party as the party of small business, stating that the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives were the "parties of big business," while the New Democrats were the "party of no business."

In the past, the **Ontario** Greens have proposed a "pay on what you burn, not what you earn," platform, but now Schreiner is proposing a "carbon fee and dividend" system, which puts an escalating price on carbon emissions. Once that money is collected, a "dividend cheque (is sent) back to the people," which will require "no bureaucracy like the Liberal **plan**," and will use existing bureaucratic infrastructure like the **HST** **rebate** system. "Those systems are already in place."

(He also said he would keep taxes "the same" at their current **rates**.)

His hope would be that people would then use that money to retrofit their homes and/or purchase **electric** vehicles.

"You decide how you want to spend it," he said.

He said that clean **energy** companies are the way forward for 21st century business, and that, using the German economic model, one can have a green economy with high-wage, manufacturing jobs. While alleging that the NDP and PC parties "want to protect yesterday's jobs," the Greens were, by his estimation, "the only (party wanting to) rebuild the middle class."

The Greens would also not cut **public** services, but he alleged that the "Ford agenda is, I think, reckless," and that, if he becomes premier on June 7, "he will cut services" once in office. However, there are areas of common ground between his party and Ford Nation, such as stopping the partial privatization of **Hydro** One.

The Greens are "very vocally opposed" to the sale of the **utility**. "It's bad **public** policy," he said. He would prefer to see a localized **electricity** system.

The Greens support a proportional representation system of electing MPPs, since, under the current system, "people don't feel that their vote counts. I feel for Conservatives who live in downtown **Toronto**," which tends to vote Liberal or NDP. He also feels for Liberals who live in rural areas, who also feel disenfranchised.

Schreiner said that while he does not "trust any of them (the other three parties) with 100 per cent of the **power**," he is hoping for a minority government at Queen's Park this June, with between one and three Green MPPs elected (he himself in running in **Guelph**, seen as fertile ground for the party.)

"We would be open to work with any party," said Schreiner, saying he would "absolutely" consider a supplyand-confidence deal, so long as Green ideals were taken into consideration, like introducing proportional representation. Q&A During his speech to the party faithful - and the merely politically curious - Schreiner began his re-marks by thanking his party's Lanark-Frontenac-**Kingston** candidate, Tay Valley Township's Anita Payne.

"I find Anita's passion and commitment ... really inspiring," said Schreiner. (He later cut the ribbon to launch her campaign website.)

Not surprisingly for an environmental party, he said he wanted to see **Ontario** begin "rapidly transitioning us from fossil **fuels**," to green **energy**, adding that, in his estimation, **solar** and **wind** **power** was a better business investment than oil and **gas**. He pointed to Cape Town, South Africa, which "is running out of water ... Water is increasingly becoming a huge issue."

He wanted to raise water taking fees "to fully cover the costs," of corporations drawing resources from **Ontario**'s land and waterways. "Stop giving our water away," he said. He also wanted to raise mining resource royalty **rates**. And for those who claim that raising the **rates** will drive away resource extraction investment, he retorted that "the nickel is not going to Mexico," but is, instead, stuck in the **Ontario** ground. "That's our **public** wealth ... We have to stop giving away our natural resources."

The **rate** he is proposing would be on par with what Saskatchewan (which has a right-of-**centre** government in office in Regina) charges, "nothing outrageous," he said.

He chastised the **Ontario** Liberals who, he claimed, "take a lot of good Green ideas (but) they don't implement them properly."

On the issue of health care, he said that **Ontario** should be investing in more nurse-led practitioner clinics, which have a "holistic approach" to health care, with medical professionals from dieticians to mental health workers to nurses under one roof, working collaboratively.

"Mental health services should be part of OHIP," he said. "Lyme disease is becoming a bigger issue. It's a tragedy that people have to liquidate their assets to treat Lyme disease."

The party is also opposed to **nuclear energy**, not just for environmental reasons, but also because "no nuclear project (in **Ontario**) has ever come in on budget or on time." **Ontario Power Generation** is in the midst of renovating the Darlington nuclear **power** station, the costs of which, he said, could raise **electricity** prices even more than they already are. Young voters During his tour, Schreiner is vising several post-secondary schools, like the University of **Ottawa** and the University of **Guelph**, and he is taking his message right to **Ontario**'s **students**.

"It's a myth that young people are only interested in social media," he said. "Nothing replaces face-to-face introductions."

As a way of reaching out to young Millennial voters, he wants to lower the "voting age to 16, when people are in their Grade 10 civics class," to get them into the habit of voting. Speak-ing in high school classes, he knows that "young people are informed and engaged."

One of the issues that young voters are finding daunting is, "How am I ever going to own a home?" At this, he suggests co-housing or tiny house options as one possible solution.

(At this, Payne reminded the audience about the Century 21 Perth Tiny House and Green Home **Festival** at the Perth campus of Algonquin College on Saturday, April 21, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are $25 at the gate. Perth's Earth Day parade will be held the next day, Sunday, April 22.)

On the work front, young people "want to have meaningful work, work I can believe in." Another economic matter he believes in is a basic income guarantee, because "nobody should drop below the low income level," and that the guarantee was a good "tool to address poverty."

He also vowed to cut "red tape for small business owners," and to cut payroll taxes for small businesses. He chastised the Wynne Liberals'minimum wage increase for "pitting workers against family businesses," he said. "Let's not make a wage issue out of people's lives ... no one should work full time and live in poverty."

Back to Top

Sunshine List shows province's top earners in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville

Carleton Place Almonte Canadian Gazette - Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $516
Reach: 12079 **Page:** A2

The **Ontario** government published its annual Sunshine List of people in the province earning more than $100,000 last year.

At the top of the list is the **Ontario Power Generation** executive, CEO Jeffrey Lyash, who was paid $1,554,456.95 in 2017.

These are just a few of the people in Lanark, Leeds and Grenville who have topped the list.

Inflation is a major factor in the list, launched 22 years ago by former PC premier Mike Harris. Accounting for the ever-rising cost of living, $100,000 in 1996 is the equivalent of about $152,000 now - and $100,000 today would have been around $67,000 back then.

If the Sunshine List's threshold had been adjusted for inflation since its inception 22 years ago, the number of employees on it would be just under 20,000. Upper Canada District School Board Director of education Stehen Sliwa, $264,978.71; associate director of education Ian Carswell, $190,147.76; and superintendents Jeremy Hobbs, $171,035.65; David Coombs, $162,996.40; Valerie Allen, $162,996.40; Susan Edwards, $162,996.40; and Timothy Mills, $162,996.40.

Catholic District School Board of Eastern **Ontario** (Retiring) director of education William Gartland, $217,922.79; superintendents Donaleen Hawes, $160,854.66; John Cameron, $146,767.76; Bonnie Norton, $136,334.76; and Brent Bovaird, $128,187.51. MPP Member of provincial parliament Randy Hillier, $116,767.92. County of Lanark Chief administrative officer Kurt Greaves, $168,334.39; Lanark Lodge director Deborah Pidgeon, $161,149.63; County of Lanark director of **public** works Terry McCann, $158,634.29; Lanark Lodge registered nurse Eady Bowes, $144,162.01; director of social services Nancy Green, $136,864.08; Glenna Churchill, director of care, $117,258.44; Jennie Bingley, treasurer/manager of corporate services $112,738.73; Lanark County Housing **Corporation**, Donna Lee Wilkinson, $110,382.57; associate director of care, Heather Duncan, $109,840.45; associate director of care, Robin Hoy, $106,865.57; environmental services manager, Robert Brady, $106,801.17; clerk/deputy chief administrative officer Leslie Drynan, $105,782.26; operations manager, **public** works, Darwin Nolan, $105,513.66. Town of Smiths Falls Police Chief Mark MacGillivray, $153,632.84; deputy police chief Richard Labelle, $136,436.04; Sgt. Paul Klassen, $132,736.805; Sgt. Jodi Empey, $119,798.806; former police chief Robert Dowdall, $114,768.04; Sgt. Thomas Blanchard, $111,302.84; Const. Dave Murphy, $111,126.77; Const. Derek Klawitter, $109,947.54; chief administrative officer Malcolm Morris, $132,002.76; acting fire Chief Randy Normandin, $113,286.82. Town of Perth Chief administrative officer John deRosenroll, $130,475.11; Grant Machan, $108,112.66; Lauren Walton, $107,993.38; Langley Britchford, $106,862.66; Shannon Baillon, $106,785.14

. Town of Carleton Place Chief administrative officer Paul Knowles, $161,778.67; Phil Hogan, $129,103.48; David Young, $126,183.01; and fire Chief Les Reynolds, $107,619.24. Township of Mississippi Mills Chief administrative officer Diane Smithson, $142,338.86; Guy Bourgon, $110,111.94; Rod Cameron, $108,089.38; Rhonda Whitmarsh, $103,093.37. Municipality of **North** Grenville Chief administrative officer Brian Carre, $143,990.41; Karen Dunlop, $118,749.64; Nicole Zywicki, $118,749.64; Mark Guy, $108,324.95; Cahl Pominville, $101,552.78; new fire Chief John Okum, $112,446.81. Kemptville Hospital Chief administrative officer Frank Vassallo, $173,558.30; Catherine

Van Vliet, $138,364.35; Julie Summers, $136,009.20; Catherine

Burke, $128,464.92; Andrew Pinhey, $125,060.58. Almonte/Carleton Place hospitals President/CEO Mary Wilson Trider, $250,237.10; Rachel de Kemp, vice president, patient and resident care and chief nursing executive, $141,021.42; Randy Shaw, $138,209.64 (vice president); Edward Mcpherson, $122,525.14 (ambulance); Angela Labelle, $100,912.34; and Elizabeth Jordan, $100,701.19. Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital Chief administrative officer Beverley McFarlane, $206,642.28 Health Unit Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, Dr. Paula Stewart, chief medical officer of health, $298,926.69. CAOs ·

Tay Valley Township, Larry Donaldson, $102,040.11; · Township of **Rideau** Lakes, Michael Dwyer, $117,425.94; · Township of Beckwith, Cynthia Moyle, $101,568.33; · Merrickville-Wolford, John Regan, $122,838.90 **Ontario** Provincial Police · Insp. Derek Needham, $153,843.23; · Sgt. Robert Croth, $117,976.36 · Const. Greg Streng, CSO, $110,361.32 · Const. Dave Bird, CSO, $106,629.24.

To view the full Sunshine list visit (www.sunshinelist.ca)

Back to Top

Martin Regg Cohn: Ontario's child care budget delivers bold pre-election blueprint - at a cost

thestar.com - Wed Mar 28 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Martin Regg Cohn
Reach: 999000

Given up for dead, **Ontario**'s Liberals have given birth to a belatedly bold child care budget as they nurse dreams of an electoral renaissance.

Queen's Park has delivered the most ambitious pre-election blueprint (www.thestar.com) in recent memory, pushing the envelope on deficit spending to rewrite the **rules** for free daycare - while bankrolling expanded pharmacare, home care, hospital care and mental health care.

But there is a price to be paid for all this caring - sharing the burden with a seemingly bottomless bottom line: $6 billion-plus annual deficits in coming years, with more borrowings piled onto our accumulated debt of more than $325 billion.

Read more:

Liberals crank up **Ontario** budget spending on seniors and families as election looms (www.thestar.com)

Highlights from the 2018 **Ontario** budget (www.thestar.com)

Liberals put health money into hospitals, focus on seniors (www.thestar.com)

All to be paid off by future generations - notably those kids newly enrolled in child care.

But if we could ask the next generation, a couple of decades from now, if it was a wise investment - more precisely, if they were worth spending the money on - how would they answer?

Would they blame this budget for the debt overhang? Or credit it for investing in daycare that gave them an early start on childhood education, and allowed parents to get back on the job, while easing looming labour market shortages from a declining birth **rate** and those stay-at-home mothers?

It's a big bet. Now you see a balanced budget, now you don't.

Premier Kathleen Wynne and Finance Minister Charles Sousa have made their choice. Now voters get to decide whether this child care (and other-kinds-of-care) budget dies an early death after the June 7 election.

With the campaign kick-off just six weeks away, Ontarians will have their say: roll back daycare, pharmacare, home care if Doug Ford's opposition Progressive Conservatives take **power**; or roll on with Wynne's Liberals, perhaps in concert with Andrea Horwath's New Democrats.

Before making that decision, voters will have to make sense of a 308-page bittersweet budget brimming with election sweeteners (www.thestar.com) and weighed down with a bitter deficit aftertaste.

And since most people won't wade through the document's fine print, they will be heavily influenced by outsized rhetoric from politicians: Sousa's spin, versus Ford's fire-breathing rhetoric, while Horwath insists she can simultaneously fight taxes and foster denticare.

The first question might well be: Can we afford universal child care?

A better question might be: Can we afford not to have free daycare?

After all, the government doesn't make parents pay a daily user fee to send their kids to all-day kindergarten, so why create a deterrent for pre-K?

But the over-arching question is: Why now?

Annual budgets don't just take account of the economic cycle; they are also tailored to the electoral cycle. The intersection of these two cycles makes this a double-barrelled budget.

Sousa argued with a straight face that "these are not election-cycle decisions we are making." But he could hardly claim the economic cycle forced his hand, given that **Ontario**'s unemployment **rate** is at historic lows - 5.5 per cent and holding - while economic growth has been remarkably robust in recent years.

To their credit, the Liberals understood that in good economic times, they could and should whittle down a deficit hangover of nearly $20 billion in the aftermath of the 2008-10 economic crisis, finally bringing the budget back to balance in the current fiscal year. So what prompted the fastest deficit U-turn in history for next year's budget?

No, not an economic downturn, but an electoral downturn. It is an axiom of politics that voters are rarely rattled by deficit financing, because they are conditioned to getting something for nothing - albeit something enduring is preferable to something ephemeral (like tax cuts).

All three major parties have plunged the province into political - as opposed to economic - deficits while in government. Interestingly, the Tories were already planning a sizeable deficit in their election platform released last November so as to bankroll their promised tax cuts; that gap could grow given Ford's vow, since becoming leader, to forego billions in carbon tax revenues.

If he wins on June 7, Ford could then claim to have shredded two election documents from two parties - first his own Tory platform, followed by the liberal budget. Just watch him.

In this budget, and the last couple, the Liberals have put forward the beginnings of bold policy prescriptions and smart social programs that were long overdue - free child care, free pharmacare, free tuition - but not all the borrowing adds up.

After launching pharmacare for young people (under age 25) in last year's budget, this year's budget expands free drugs to seniors by eliminating co-payments and deductibles. Is that the best use of hundreds of millions of dollars in government spending, given that today's seniors are in a better position to afford those (capped) fees than, say children who lack access to denticare? Of course not, but seniors are a powerful voting bloc, and they turn out on election day.

And don't forget last year's decision to subsidize rising **hydro** bills (remortgaging **rates** through a longer amortization period). The borrowing was done off the government's books, on the backs of **Ontario Power Generation**, adding to the overall debt burden; the reduced rhetoric over **hydro** is proof of how politics prevails over economics.

It's all part of the good, the bad and the ugly of borrowing. And hedging budgetary bets in an election year.

Martin Regg Cohn is a columnist based in **Toronto** covering **Ontario** politics. Follow him on Twitter: @reggcohn

Back to Top

Don't believe the Ontario polls

Ottawa Citizen - Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Alistair Hensler

Ad Value: $1,545
Reach: 114846 **Page:** A9

Re: **Ontario** election will challenge the pollsters, March 23.

Mohammed Adam evoked the memory of John Diefenbaker's observation about an unfavourable poll: "Polls are for dogs!" In the world of politics, any polls prior to election day are ancient history.

In the **Ontario** election, still more than two months off, the voters will have a clear choice between Kathleen Wynne and Doug Ford.

Wynne is a known entity. Whether you like her or not, her government has led the province through a difficult period, achieving a buoyant economy while introducing a **cap-and-trade** policy to protect the environment and earn the province $5 billion.

Ford is a question mark. He leads a fractured Progressive Conservative party without a platform and his abilities have been questioned within the party. The party could not even conduct an problemfree leadership election.

Ford is prone to making policies without forethought. He will negate Wynne's capand-trade policy, thereby giving up $5 billion of income, and concurrently reducing government spending.

Anyone who remembers the disastrous impact of premier Mike Harris's slash-and-cut policy should be wary of that promise.

In the period 2015-2017, seven byelections were held. The Liberals held one and gained one, losing two. The Conservatives held three and gained two. That hardly seems like the rout polls have been predicting. I think that Diefenbaker got it right.

Alistair Hensler,

Nepean

Back to Top

London Hydro wins Customer Excellence Award - London | Globalnews.ca

globalnews.ca - Thu Mar 29 2018
Tone: Neutral

London Hydro won the Customer Excellence Award at the Electricity Distributors Association gala in Toronto on Monday.

Back to Top