Infomart Newsletters

From: Infomart Newsletters
Sent: April 3, 2018 7:52 AM
To: Rosemarie Leclair
Subject: Morning News Clippings - Tuesday, April 3, 2018

View in Browser

Morning News Clippings

powered by: infomart

Date: Tuesday, April 3, 2018
Edited by: Paul Crawford (Paul.Crawford@oeb.ca)

Contact Editor

Clippings Summary

News - 13 Results

Keeping the Pickering nuclear plant open until 2024 is good for economy, report says

thestar.com - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Kristin Rushowy
Reach: 999000

Keeping the Pickering nuclear plant open and operating until 2024 makes economic sense, says a new report sponsored by Ontario Power Generation. The study, released Tuesday by the Ontario Chamber of ...

Hydro One will keep running U.S. coal-fired power plant

Ottawa Citizen - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: David Reevely

Ad Value: $7,190
Reach: 114846 **Page:** A1 / Front

The Washington power company Hydro One is buying will be ready to close its huge coal-fired generating station ahead of schedule, thanks to conditions put on the corporate merger by state regulators there. Not that ...

Canada Pension Plan Investment Board Signs Agreement to Acquire Canadian Operating Wind and Solar Power Portfolio

www.cppib.com - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral

Permalink

Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) announced today that it has signed an agreement to acquire a portfolio of six Canadian operating wind and solar power projects from NextEra Energy Partners, LP (NYSE: NEP) for $741 million, inclusive of ...

CPPIB to purchase Ontario-based renewable energy projects | Benefits Canada

www.benefitscanada.com · Mon Apr 2 2018
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

The Canada Pension Plan Investment Board is acquiring six Canadian wind and solar power projects from Florida-based NextEra Energy Partners for $741 million.

NextEra selling Ontario wind & solar assets

www.windpowerengineering.com · Mon Apr 2 2018
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

NextEra Energy Partners, LP announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement with Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) for the sale of its portfolio of wind and solar generation assets in Ontario, Canada, for a total consideration ...

Faulty blade toppled turbine near Chatham

Sarnia Observer · Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Trevor Terfloth

Ad Value: $718
Reach: 12173 **Page:** A1 / Front

A single faulty blade is being blamed for a **wind turbine** tower collapse in Raleigh Township earlier this year. "The **review** confirmed that the collapse of a **turbine** at the facility earlier this year was ...

Grit MPP 'proud'of deficit; Says Ontario can afford it, and he'd 'cheerfuly do it again'

Ottawa Sun · Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Antonella Artuso

Ad Value: $1,206
Reach: 45442 **Page:** A3

A Liberal MPP would "cheerfully" run up the province's debt again, saying he's proud of his party's 15-year record in government. As first reported in the Mississauga News, local MPP Bob Delaney reacted strongly to criticism of his government's ...

And who is to pay for these election promises?

The Timmins Daily Press · Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Positive
Byline: Ross Ayotte

Ad Value: $411

Reach: 9196 **Page:** A4

I am just waiting for the big announcement that everybody in **Ontario** gets free groceries for life for the Liberal vote Premier Wynne's 25% **hydro** discount was to cost a minimum of $45 billion for $24 billion of **hydro** ...

Canada needs more carbon pricing, not less

Stratford Beacon-Herald - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Elaine Blacklock Md

Ad Value: $323
Reach: 10143 **Page:** A5

Re: **Centre**-left blind to populism's true cause As a busy pediatrician, deeply concerned about environmental issues and **climate change**, I read the above March 7 Postmedia editorial with considerable dismay. The second ...

Old Liberal arrogance has returned

National Post - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Kellym Cparland

Ad Value: $14,269
Reach: 159480 **Page:** A9

Governments grow understandably tired of critics who spend their days finding new things to complain about, but the Trudeau Liberals are unusually forthright in displaying their contempt for anyone who holds views they reject. Finance Minister Bill ...

Alberta anger near boiling with Bill C-69

National Post - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Kelvin Browne

Ad Value: $10,961
Reach: 159480 **Page:** A4

A few years ago, Albertans would only see red ink in a Quebec budget. Now we just see red. Quebec's latest budget is being painted as a model for Canada. The province will have a $1.3-billion surplus. Its Generations Fund, devoted to paying down ...

Oakville experiences 3.2% power reduction during Earth Hour

Oakville Beaver - Mon Apr 2 2018
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $902
Reach: 47751 **Page:** 1

Oakville Hydro reports that during Earth Hour (Saturday, March 24), the demand for **electricity** in **Oakville** dropped by 3.2 per cent. Officials said this is the equivalent of turning off 390,000 light ...

Braid: The growing national push to suppress Alberta's economy | Calgary Herald

calgaryherald.com - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral
Permalink

Paul Crawford noted on Tuesday, April 3, 2018
Energy East is mentioned.

A few years ago, Albertans would only see red ink in a Quebec budget. Now we just see red.

Clippings Summary

Full Articles

Keeping the Pickering nuclear plant open until 2024 is good for economy, report says

thestar.com - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Kristin Rushowy
Reach: 999000

Keeping the Pickering nuclear plant open and operating until 2024 makes economic sense, says a new report sponsored by **Ontario Power Generation**.

The study, released Tuesday by the **Ontario** Chamber of Commerce and the **Canadian Centre** for Economic Analysis, says the move would add a total $12.3 billion to **Ontario**'s GDP and support 7,600 jobs a year at both the station as well as with suppliers.

The study also touts the lower cost of nuclear **power**, and that it fits in with the province's plans to curb carbon emissions.

"The nuclear industry contributes to the **Ontario** economy by creating jobs, supporting a large-scale supply chain, and stabilizes the production of **power** contribution to our **energy** security," it says.

The Pickering site - which supplies **power** for 1.5 million homes every day - is responsible for 14 per cent of **electricity** in the province.

"Based on the results of this study, Pickering's continued operation to 2024 would be a benefit to **Ontario**'s economy, it's **climate** change goals and the stability of the **energy** system," says the report, which also notes the "considerable supply chain jobs" - including those at engineering firms and in tooling systems - as well as for a medical isotope that's used to sterilize hospital gowns and equipment.

Ontario Power Generation (**OPG**) has applied to the federal nuclear safety commission to extend operations at Pickering. The site has six reactors, two of which are expected to be shut down in 2022, and the remaining four remain in use until 2024. The first four Pickering reactors began operating in 1971, according to **OPG**.

The report did not assess safety issues at the ageing plant - though it does note the site has been "positively assessed twice over" - and assumes no **service** disruptions at the station.

"Nuclear **power** is the backbone of **Ontario**'s **electricity** system, providing reliable **electricity** to 1.5 million homes a day," said Rocco Rossi, president of the **Ontario** Chamber of Commerce."

He told the Star the economic impact of Pickering is "remarkable" and said that especially as two other nuclear sites - Darlington and Bruce - undergo refurbishment, "it's critical to keep this 14 per cent."

Read more:

Report paints grim picture of Fukushima-scale nuclear accident in Pickering (www.thestar.com)

OPG must cut $500M over next 5 years from nuclear operations budget, **energy** regular orders (www.thestar.com)

Indigenous demonstrators, environmentalists urge governments to stop using nuclear **power** (www.thestar.com)

Paul Smetanin, head of **Canadian** **Centre** for Economic Analysis, said their assessment was **independent**, and called Pickering a "key contributor to the **Ontario** economy through job retainment and creation from associated economic activity while also systemically ensuring the reasonableness of **electricity** costs, which can impact housing affordability in the region."

He said the jobs it creates - directly and indirectly - tend to pay higher wages, and "this has a ripple effect not just in Pickering but across the entire province ... go east to **west** across the province, and the economic fingerprint of the plant is felt."

Amid criticisms about the oversupply of **electricity** in **Ontario**, he said "when you start to look out to 2024, it's the sort of commodity resource that you don't want to be undersupplied."

Last month, the **Ontario** Clean Air Alliance released a report detailing how a Fukushima -type meltdown in Pickering could affect the area, on the anniversary of the nuclear disaster in Japan.

The Star's Tess Kalinowski reported that the non-profit group wants **Ontario** to shut down the oldest nuclear generating station in the province, and instead use water-generated **electricity** from **Hydro** Quebec.

The Pickering plant has been costly to maintain - with at least a $200 million price tag in the past eight years.

Back to Top

Hydro One will keep running U.S. coal-fired power plant

Ottawa Citizen - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: David Reevely

Ad Value: $7,190
Reach: 114846 **Page:** A1 / Front

The Washington **power** company **Hydro** One is buying will be ready to close its huge coal-fired generating station ahead of schedule, thanks to conditions put on the corporate merger by state regulators there.

Not that we actually **plan** to do that, the company is telling other regulators in Montana, where the huge coal-fired generating station in question employs hundreds of people. We'll be in the coal business for a good long time yet.

Hydro One, in which the **Ontario** government now owns a big minority stake, is still working on its purchase of Avista, a private **power** **utility** based in Spokane.

The $6.7-billion deal, which **Hydro** One announced in July, includes a 15 per cent share in two of the four generating units in a coal plant in Colstrip, Montana, one of the biggest in the western United States. Avista gets most of its **electricity** from **hydro** dams and **gas** but uses the Colstrip plant when demand for **power** is high and water levels at its dams are low.

Colstrip's a town of fewer than 2,500 people whose industries are the power plant and the open-pit mines that feed it about 10 million tonnes of coal a year. Two of Colstrip's generators, older ones Avista doesn't have any stake in, are closing in 2022. The other two will be all that keep the town in business.

In Washington, they don't like the coal plant and its pollution. In Montana, the future of Colstrip is a much bigger concern. The companies have to satisfy regulators in both places that letting Hydro One buy Avista is in the public interest.

Ontario proudly closed the last of our coal plants in 2014 and outlawed new ones as environmental menaces.

When Hydro One said it was buying Avista, which makes about $100 million in profit a year, Premier Kathleen Wynne said she hoped Ontario's "value system" would spread to Avista's operations.

The settlement is "an important step towards bringing together two historic companies," Hydro One's chief executive Mayo Schmidt said in announcing it.

The deal has approval from the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission staff but is subject to a vote by the group's three commissioners. It doesn't commit Avista to closing anything at Colstrip or selling its share. But Avista and Hydro One will budget as if the Colstrip coal burners will close in 2027, instead of running into the 2040s as their owners had once planned.

In accounting terms, they'll depreciate the value of their share of the plant to zero over the next nine years, reflecting what they say is the end of the plant's "useful life." Another of Colstrip's owners, Puget Sound Energy, has previously agreed with Washington regulators that it will budget for a Colstrip closure in 2027 as well.

Avista and Hydro One will look for sources of 50 megawatts of renewable electricity in the next four years and another 90 megawatts to supplement Avista's supply once the Colstrip plant eventually closes, they promise in Washington. They'll put $3 million into a "community transition fund" for Colstrip.

The money will come from the companies'profits and cash, the agreement says. "Hydro One will not seek cost recovery for such funds from ratepayers in Ontario," it says specifically.

"Ontario has always been a global leader in the transition away from dirty coal power and towards clean energy," said Doug Howell, an anti-coal campaigner with the Sierra Club, which is a party to the agreement. "This settlement continues that tradition, paving the way for the closure of the largest single source of climate pollution in the American West by 2027, if not earlier."

Montanans aren't as thrilled.

That state has its own public services commission, doing its own examination of the corporate merger, which has asked Hydro One and Avista to explain in detail why they want to write off the value of the Colstrip burners early. The City of Colstrip has filed a petition saying it wants in on Montana hearings because "the potential closure of (Avista's units) would be devastating to our community."

Don't get too worked up, an Avista vice-president urged the Montana commission just before Easter.

"Just because an asset is depreciated does not mean that one would otherwise remove that asset from service if the asset is still performing as intended," Jason Thackston testified in a session that dealt only with what the deal with Washington state would mean to Colstrip. We're talking strictly about an accounting manoeuvre, not an operational commitment.

Six joint owners will have to agree to close the Colstrip generators, and there's "no other tacit understanding or unstated agreement" to do that, he said.

Besides Washington and Montana, state regulators in Idaho, Alaska and Oregon and multiple federal authorities have to sign off on the deal before it can happen. **Hydro** One hopes it'll be done in the second half of this year. dreevely@postmedia.com twitter.com/davidreevely

Back to Top

Canada Pension Plan Investment Board Signs Agreement to Acquire Canadian Operating Wind and Solar Power Portfolio

www.cppib.com - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral

Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) announced today that it has signed an agreement to acquire a portfolio of six Canadian operating wind and solar power projects from NextEra Energy Partners, LP (NYSE: NEP) for $741 million, inclusive of working capital and subject to customary adjustments.

Back to Top

CPPIB to purchase Ontario-based renewable energy projects | Benefits Canada

www.benefitscanada.com - Mon Apr 2 2018
Tone: Neutral

The Canada Pension Plan Investment Board is acquiring six Canadian wind and solar power projects from Florida-based NextEra Energy Partners for $741 million.

Back to Top

NextEra selling Ontario wind & solar assets

www.windpowerengineering.com - Mon Apr 2 2018
Tone: Neutral

NextEra Energy Partners, LP announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement with Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) for the sale of its portfolio of wind and solar generation assets in Ontario, Canada, for a total consideration of about $582.3 million.

Back to Top

Faulty blade toppled turbine near Chatham

Sarnia Observer - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Trevor Terfloth

Ad Value: $718
Reach: 12173 **Page:** A1 / Front

A single faulty blade is being blamed for a **wind turbine** tower collapse in Raleigh Township earlier this year.

"The **review** confirmed that the collapse of a **turbine** at the facility earlier this year was caused by a single faulty blade. No other similar issues were identified through the **review** process," said Chad Reed, director of investor relations, in an email Monday.

He added the **review** was conducted by third-party professionals, as well as the company's own engineering team.

The **turbine** tower buckled in the early morning of Jan. 19. The entire 52-**turbine** facility was taken offline as a precaution until the inspection was complete. There were no injuries.

The facility returned to **service** this past Thursday, according to owner TerraForm **Power**.

"We will continue to regularly and rigorously monitor all turbines as part of our ongoing **review** and maintenance process," Reed said.

The incident prompted renewed calls from two area Progressive Conservative MPPs -Rick Nicholls and Monte McNaughton - for the **Ontario** government to impose a moratorium on **wind** **turbine** projects in the region.

McNaughton (PC - Lambton-Kent-Middlesex), said he still has concerns about **wind** turbines and wants a halt to the **North** Kent **Wind** and Otter Creek projects.

After the Raleigh collapse, he said there was a "flood of calls" to his office.

"Many of my constituents are living close to **wind** turbines," he said. "They initially were concerned that the **turbine** they're living near might be the next one to bend in half."

McNaughton noted problems with other **wind** projects in the region, adding that well water quality must be ensured. Local activists claim there is an impact on groundwater after several wells experienced problems.

"There are thousands of **wind** turbines in Southwestern **Ontario**," he said. "People are rightly concerned about the safety of the turbines."

McNaughton said he plans to continue to raise the issue with the government.

Ministry of the Environment and **Climate** Change staff said they weren't aware of similar collapses in the area before.

In a previous interview, a spokesperson for the **Canadian** **Wind** **Energy** Association (CanWEA) indicated such failures are rare.

"As far as CanWEA is aware, this is the second time an incident of this kind has occurred in the history of the **Canadian** fleet of 6,400-plus **wind** turbines," Jean-François Nolet said. With files from Ellwood Shreve, Postmedia News

Back to Top

Grit MPP 'proud'of deficit; Says Ontario can afford it, and he'd 'cheerfuly do it again'

Ottawa Sun - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Antonella Artuso

Ad Value: $1,206
Reach: 45442 **Page:** A3

A Liberal MPP would "cheerfully" run up the province's debt again, saying he's proud of his party's 15-year record in government.

As first reported in the Mississauga News, local MPP Bob Delaney reacted strongly to criticism of his government's spending Thursday during a "budget breakfast."

Ontario can easily carry its current debt load, insisted the MPP for Mississauga-Streetsville.

"I would do it again and I would do it proudly," Delaney said of the debt incurred, according to an audio recording of the event. "I would cheerfully do it again."

Ontario now carries a debt of more than $300 billion, up from about $140 billion from the time the Liberals took office in 2003.

Much of the new debt was accumulated after the 2008-09 recession as the Ontario government bailed out the auto industry and began borrowing billions every year to cover operating costs.

However, having finally balanced the books this past year, Premier Kathleen Wynne is proposing six more years of deficits.

In an interview with the Toronto Sun Monday, Delaney said he was talking about the many investments the government had made in Mississauga - especially following the recession - in post-secondary education, hospitals and transportation.

"I was very proud of those projects … I would be pleased to go into the streets with that track record and I would do it again," he said.

PC finance critic Vic Fedeli said the Liberals clearly don't understand the pain they've inflicted on Ontarians with their budget deficits and plans for even more borrowing.

"They simply do not understand the fiscal reality and how people shake their head at that when they're hurting all throughout Ontario," Fedeli said. "We still have the highest hydro rates in North America; we still have this red tape that's crushing businesses; we have businesses that are leaving Ontario; and more importantly we have businesses that announce they're not coming to Ontario."

Amazon and Google recently announced first-ever data centres in Canada, and chose to locate them in Quebec, Fedeli said. aartuso@postmedia.com

Back to Top

THE DAILY PRESS

And who is to pay for these election promises?

The Timmins Daily Press - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Positive
Byline: Ross Ayotte

Ad Value: $411
Reach: 9196 **Page:** A4

I am just waiting for the big announcement that everybody in Ontario gets free groceries for life for the Liberal vote Premier Wynne's 25% hydro discount was to cost a minimum of $45 billion for $24 billion of hydro relief if the governments could balance their budgets for 30 years in a row. And now the Wynne Liberals have stated they will run huge deficits for the next six years if re-elected, with zero thought of getting a balanced budget. If they win this election, they will continue to bribe Ontarians with their own money on the following election to stay in power as the auditor general pointed out earlier, this relief could cost Ontario close to $90 billion if financed.

Then you add in free child care at $2.2 billion over three years, then Wynne promised $300 million for special needs children over three years then $2.1 billion for mental health care - but these election bribes will run over budget due to Wynne catering to union demands for better pay and low-balling the actually cost due to inflation and interest **rates** on the cost to borrow the funds to implement.

The Liberals in 2005 implemented the largest tax grab in **Ontario**'s history at the time with the health tax. Now behind in the polls, she is offering free prescription drugs to seniors while eliminating the disposal fee. The cost to the taxpayer is $575 million a year.

Then in 2010, the Liberals created the largest tax grab in our history with the **HST** so with all Wynne's free election promises, what will be the name of the new tax that out does these two taxes that she will create? After years of cutting funding to hospitals, nickel and diming our doctors and laying off nurses, Premier Wynne has just realized a few months before the election our health care in **Ontario** is in shambles and pledges $822 million more in 2018-2019 on top of the 3.2 % increase promised in last year's budget. This just shows how badly the government has underfunded health care.

Can you really trust Wynne? Look at her record on E-Health, Ornge, **hydro** and will she cut funding after the election or were these just stretch goals? Wynne also promised the Hospital for Sick Kids in **Toronto** $2.4 billion over 10 years to rebuild which will cost the taxpayers more due to inflation and interest **rates** on the cost to borrow the funds.

Then you add in all the other election bribes and the ones not released yet and you have to wonder what are the next assets the Liberals will sell off and what new taxes and fees will be created and how much our existing taxes and fees will rise to pay for all this free stuff.

Ross Ayotte

Smiths Falls

Back to Top

Canada needs more carbon pricing, not less

The Beacon Herald

Stratford Beacon-Herald - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Elaine Blacklock Md

Ad Value: $323
Reach: 10143 **Page:** A5

Re: **Centre**-left blind to populism's true cause As a busy pediatrician, deeply concerned about environmental issues and **climate** change, I read the above March 7 Postmedia editorial with considerable dismay. The second last paragraph has been gnawing at me now for more than two weeks, and I feel compelled to respond.

I quote: "Trudeau's national carbon tax for example, pretty much does zilch for the environment. It effectively, however, kills jobs, raises the cost of living and lowers the standard of living, especially for poor and middle-class Canadians."

The implication most people would take from this statement is that carbon pricing is useless, and a job and economy killer. The facts do not bear this out, and for many reasons, it's the wrong message to be delivering at a time when our need to find effective strategies for curtailing our greenhouse **gas** emissions is becoming ever more pressing and urgent.

Citizen's **Climate** Lobby and the **Canadian** Eco-Fiscal Commission have for several years been advocating for revenue-neutral carbon pricing, where 100 per cent of the proceeds of the "tax" or fee are returned to citizens as a dividend. This form of carbon pricing is in fact the Trudeau government's proposed backup **plan** for provinces that refuse to devise their own carbon-pricing schemes. It's a market-based approach, and may well be the only way to shift our economy to clean **energy** quickly enough to avoid **climate** change disaster for ourselves and our children. Mr. Trudeau's national carbon tax **plan** is not wrong, but it is decades too late, and not ambitious enough. However, I submit that we should not be dismissing the **plan** as useless; instead, we should be pushing for the rapid implementation of even more earnest and vigorous carbon pricing that can effectively and rapidly nudge our economy away from fossil **fuels**.

Ontario currently has carbon pricing in place in the form of **cap and trade**. The new leader of the **Ontario** Progressive Conservative party has indicated his intention to withdraw the province from carbon pricing and fight Mr. Trudeau on his national **plan**. In my opinion, that would be a drastic step backwards and nothing short of folly. And yet, our elected representatives will only do what voters allow them to do.

To the majority of Canadians, who tell pollsters they want more action on **climate** change, I say: it's getting really urgent. This is not a time to be quiet. It's time to push our politicians at all levels to implement a substantive, economy-wide and rising price on carbon, and give the money back to the people.

Elaine Blacklock MD

Sudbury, Ont.

Back to Top

Old Liberal arrogance has returned

National Post - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Negative
Byline: Kellym Cparland

Ad Value: $14,269
Reach: 159480 **Page:** A9

Governments grow understandably tired of critics who spend their days finding new things to complain about, but the Trudeau Liberals are unusually forthright in displaying their contempt for anyone who holds views they reject.

Finance Minister Bill Morneau did little to make life easier for himself when he heaped derision on anyone who dared question his attempted changes to the small business tax last summer. If he'd done a bit more listening and a lot less attacking he might have lessened the embarrassment that came when he eventually had to capitulate.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau evidently learned nothing from concerns - including from within his own caucus - raised when he made clear that anyone who differs from his beliefs on abortion is not welcome to run for the Liberal party or to vote their conscience in the House of Commons. His government took its refusal to countenance dissent a step further by linking a summer jobs program to abortion beliefs, blocking **students** from summer job grants if the institution doing the hiring dares to hold pro-life opinions.

Environment Minister Catherine McKenna is the latest to display this sense of righteousness in telling CTV's Evan Solomon she can't be bothered with people who don't fully support her approach to **climate** change.

"I have no time for folks who are, like, you know, 'we shouldn't take action,'" she said during a spirited exchange.

"What do you mean you have no time?" Solomon countered. "You've gotta have time. Your job is to have time for folks who care about this issue and want to understand."

Backpedalling, McKenna tried another approach: "No, I don't have time for politicians who play cynical games about climate change ... I don't have time for politicians who pretend that climate change isn't real."

It was an excellent example of the Liberals'faith in their moral infallibility, and the misleading politics they're willing to engage in to defend that position. McKenna's second kick at the can - claiming her beef is with fellow politicians who think climate change is a hoax - would be a fair point if there were a horde of Canadian leaders who hold that view. Unfortunately, while there may still be one or two holdouts, most of the discussion about climate change is over the measures deployed by governments like Trudeau's, and whether they are likely to produce real improvement, or are mainly a cynical political ploy to raise cash on the back of public guilt.

Perhaps the most vociferous critic of the Liberal position has been Brad Wall, the recently-retired premier of Saskatchewan. Wall doesn't question the reality of the issue or the need for action, he simply disagrees that a tax is the most effective means of dealing with it. And he has an excellent argument: there is lots of valid doubt as to effectiveness of carbon taxes. While pricing unquestionably has an impact on consumer habits, and a stinging carbon tax would no doubt encourage people to be more cautious, big uncertainties remain.

For instance, in order to work, the taxes have to be high enough to change personal habits. But the higher the tax, the more likely people are to get upset. So politicians introduce charges that aren't high enough to do the job, but conveniently funnel more revenue into government coffers to spend on other goodies.

There is also legitimate concern that tax hikes in well-meaning countries like Canada are largely wasted as long as much bigger and more populous countries like India and China - and Donald Trump's U.S. - continue to pour emissions into the atmosphere. It's nice to be on the right side of an issue, but should Canadians really be forced to pay heavily for token measures that won't reduce the problem? An additional argument relates to the uses politicians find for the tax once it's in place. British Columbia, which began charging for carbon a decade ago, defended it by pledging all revenue would be returned to taxpayers, but has quietly and steadily moved away from revenue neutrality, finding ways to divert the money to favoured programs. The new NDP government of Premier John Horgan abandoned the pretence altogether in its first budget, announcing that carbon revenue would be used to "create jobs, benefit communities and reduce climate pollution." As a kicker, the first of four annual increases to the B.C. tax took effect on Sunday.

Like so many zealots, McKenna tries to portray all doubters as blithering idiots who are either too stupid to understand the issue or too callous to care. It's a haughty and cavalier approach, the sort of imperious pomposity that so annoys non-Liberals. To support her point she raised the recent Progressive Conservative leadership campaign in Ontario. There were four candidates, she noted, and "not one had a plan, not one of them."

That's not true. Even the most fiercely outspoken of the four - fringe candidate Tanya Granic Allen - asserted her belief in climate change. Her point, as with the others, was that the green energy program introduced by Ontario's Liberals is ineffective and riddled with defects. The cap-and-trade program gives special treatment to preferred industries. The money goes into whatever revenue hole the government needs to plug. The huge subsidies paid to alternative energy firms produce overpriced power the province doesn't need and sells at a loss. The special deals cooked up with foreign firms have proved catastrophic money-losers, forcing the government to chop away at multi-billion-dollar contracts.

For McKenna, leaders like Ontario's Kathleen Wynne are preferable because they "have a plan." Like so many politicians, she loves plans, because they give the appearance that something is being done. It may be a bad plan, which carries heavy costs for taxpayers while producing no progress, but at least it's a **plan**, and can be waved about at a photo op.

Her critics might suggest it's better to seek out practical options that achieve a measurable end while minimizing the pain on consumers. But McKenna has no time for them.

National Post Twitter.com/kellymcparland

Back to Top

Alberta anger near boiling with Bill C-69

National Post - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral
Byline: Kelvin Browne

Ad Value: $10,961
Reach: 159480 **Page:** A4

A few years ago, Albertans would only see red ink in a Quebec budget.

Now we just see red. Quebec's latest budget is being painted as a model for Canada. The province will have a $1.3-billion surplus. Its Generations Fund, devoted to paying down debt, is growing. Quebecers will get a tax break of up to $336 per person. Wonderful. Way to go, Quebec.

But could the province do all this without its annual equalization cheque - $11.8 billion today, rising to $13.3 billion next year? Of course it couldn't.

Without this indirect wealth transfer based on the strength of western economies, Quebec would still be a deficit-ridden mess.

Equalization has always come with a tacit understanding.

If provinces with less overall wealth are going to be topped up, they should bloody well support the provinces that supply the topping.

Only one part of Canada - the **West** - is laying these golden eggs. You'd think there would be some recognition. But no, other governments are actively suppressing Alberta's economy.

Quebec opposition killed the **Energy** East pipeline. Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre, since defeated, fronted some 83 Montrealarea municipalities that stoked an environmental fear campaign.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government stepped in to impose brand-new emissions standards on the pipeline. The project died, but the message lives on.

And so, there's no chance to sell more **Canadian** oil to eastern Canadians.

But there's plenty of equalization money for every eastern province, except Newfoundland and Labrador, which is now trapped in wholly unjustified "have" status.

The equalization formula itself is dense and tricky, subject to reinterpretation on the fly. It's now being deviously manipulated.

Ontario was supposed to be a "have" province by now, and thus receive no payment.

But a surprise federal accounting trick changed a ceiling to a floor, and **Ontario** scored an "adjustment" of nearly $1 billion.

And the rationale was that Alberta's economy is weakening! The formula is supposed to allow for all **Canadian** governments to offer roughly the same level of **service**. Over the years, equalization has helped create stability in a vast and diverse country.

Albertans have generally tolerated the system, even though projections show the province will receive no single equalization dollar for generations.

But fuzzy "Canadianism" has an emotional limit. It's reached when you realize that **Ottawa**, along with the province cashing the biggest cheque, won't hesitate to flatten your own economy.

Alberta can't count on **regional** help either. B.C., a fellow "have" province, is ardently trying to kill Alberta's one chance at pipeline access to tidewater.

And it may be the last chance.

Having cancelled **Northern** Gateway after it was approved, after changing the **rules** to run off **Energy** East, **Ottawa** is now bringing in legislation that could doom Alberta to continued low **energy** prices and constrained shipping.

This is Bill C-69, currently before Parliament. The **Canadian Energy** Pipeline Association told a committee last week that under these new **rules**, "it would be difficult to imagine a new major pipeline could be built in Canada."

The Bill C-69 summary says it "provides for a process for assessing the environmental, health, social and economic effects of designated projects with a view to preventing certain adverse effects and fostering sustainability."

Please note that "economic" is the last consideration.

The bill is strongly negative about resource development. The language suggests that even current projects could be cancelled.

Bill C-69 "prohibits proponents, subject to certain conditions, from carrying out a designated project if the designated project is likely to cause certain environmental, health, social or economic effects, unless the Minister of the Environment or Governor in Council determines that those effects are in the **public** interest."

If there's any negative impact, the politicians will decide. Trudeau has already shown what that means.

There's much more, all stacked against oilsands and pipelines.

United Conservative Party Leader Jason Kenney asked Monday for a joint legislature motion against the new **rules**.

"The proposed new measures will kill further investment in Alberta's **energy** projects and result in even more uncertainty for an **energy** industry struggling under numerous job-killing policies," he said in a statement.

Alarmingly, he seems to be exactly right.

The anti-Alberta pressure keeps rising. Admiring Quebec's budget is no consolation at all.

Back to Top

Oakville experiences 3.2% power reduction during Earth Hour

Oakville Beaver - Mon Apr 2 2018
Tone: Neutral
Ad Value: $902
Reach: 47751 **Page:** 1

Oakville Hydro reports that during Earth Hour (Saturday, March 24), the demand for **electricity** in **Oakville** dropped by 3.2 per cent.

Officials said this is the equivalent of turning off 390,000 light bulbs.

The reduction is not quite as good as 2017's results, which saw a **power** drop of 3.65 per cent.

The year before (2016) **Oakville** saw a **power** reduction of 3.7 per cent.

This year's number was not as bad as **Oakville**'s worst Earth Hour showing, a 1.6 per cent **power** reduction in 2015, but not nearly as good as results in 2009 when the town saw **energy** demand drop by 13.3 per cent.

Oakville's first Earth Hour effort achieved a respectable 8.2 per cent reduction in 2008.

"Conserving **energy** is top of mind for many customers who are looking to combat **climate** change," said Rob Lister, president and CEO of **Oakville Hydro**.

"Earth Hour is a reminder for all of us to consider other things we can do to make a difference in saving **energy** and continuing to build a green town."

Oakville Mayor Rob Burton noted that every action taken-big or small- to conserve **energy** has a positive impact on the community and the environment.

"On behalf of council, I want to thank all of our residents for their contribution not only during Earth Hour, but also throughout the year," said Burton.

"We encourage residents to continue finding ways to reduce their **energy** use in their daily lives."

Earth Hour is a worldwide movement for the planet that the World Wildlife Fund started in 2007 with a lights-off event in Sydney, Australia.

Since then, it has grown to engage more than 7,000 cities and towns worldwide.

The one-hour event, which lasts from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., continues to symbolize the larger effort to combat **climate** change.

For more information on Earth Hour visit www.earthhour.org.

Back to Top

Braid: The growing national push to suppress Alberta's economy | Calgary Herald

calgaryherald.com - Tue Apr 3 2018
Tone: Neutral

A few years ago, Albertans would only see red ink in a Quebec budget.

Now we just see red.

Back to Top