

Neil Brodie

From: Neil Brodie
Sent: November 28, 2017 10:06 AM
To: Rosemarie Leclair
Subject: RE: Morning News Summary - Tues. Nov. 28, 2017

I'm going thru the PC platform now.

I have the BoT document and will do a summary this afternoon.

The CBC article misrepresents the community meeting as a Hydro One meeting not a OEB meeting. I'll ask Karen to get then headline changed.

Hydro One Remote Communities Inc.
 EB-2017-0051

Community meeting

Wednesday, November 29, 2017

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

In person: Victoria Inn, 555 Arthur Street West, Thunder Bay

Online: Email ConsumerVoice@oeb.ca and we'll send you the link

Call Toll-free: 1-866-832-4445 (Pass code: 4784140#)

From: Rosemarie Leclair
Sent: Tuesday, November 28, 2017 9:59 AM
To: Neil Brodie <Neil.Brodie@oeb.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Morning News Summary - Tues. Nov. 28, 2017

Can you get me to board of trade doc with their recs around energy issues and oeb.
 Ditto PC platform released over the weekend.

And re HONI remotes meeting... can you find out if we had s community meeting in remotes... I don't understand timing of this HONI meeting

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: John Bozzo <John.Bozzo@oeb.ca>
Date: November 28, 2017 at 9:46:41 AM EST
To: ##Clippings_Distribution_List <Clippings_Distribution_List@oeb.ca>
Subject: Morning News Summary - Tues. Nov. 28, 2017

Good morning,

Here is your morning news summary.

Collingwood Connection: Collingwood to receive more than \$11.8 million if hydro sale

approved (story below)

- Collingwood will receive \$11.88 million for the 50 per cent stake in Collus PowerStream, as well as \$200,000 toward transaction costs and a \$150,000 donation toward the Waterfront Master Plan.
- The company has also applied for a one per cent rate decrease and a rate freeze for five years with the **Ontario Energy Board (OEB)**. The deal is still pending OEB approval.
- An energy lawyer from the Town of Collingwood, Mark Rodger, is also involved in the sale of Orillia Power Distribution to Hydro One, which approved in October, 2016, and has been upheld by the OEB.
 - This deal has a similar rate freeze clause as the proposed Collingwood deal and the **board is concerned this could lead to higher rates.**
- According to a procedural order filed in July 27 and obtained by simcoe.com, the OEB has concerns over potential rate increases :
 - "Having reviewed these submissions, the OEB has determined that the hearing of this application will be **adjourned until the OEB renders its decision on Hydro One's distribution rate application,**" the document said. "The OEB has determined that Hydro One should defend its cost allocation proposal in its distribution rate application prior to the OEB determining if the Orillia acquisition is likely to cause harm to any of its current customers. The OEB's determinations in the Hydro One rate case will be determinative of how customers impacted by acquisitions are to be treated."
- Rodger said Orillia and Hydro One have both filed motions to review the decision to hold up the approval.
 - **"In the Orillia situation, the board is wondering if Hydro One's current distribution rate before the board may foretell what will happen in Orillia's rates,"** Rodger said. **"The fact is, they're not related. We think the OEB has misjudged the situation."**

Bayshore Broadcasting: Financial Assistance to Heat Homes on the Rise

- 50% more households requiring assistance to pay for wood, oil or propane.
- **The Ontario Energy Board** recently moved to ban electricity distributors from cutting power to delinquent accounts during winter months, ensuring those who fall behind on payments still have heat.
- However, these traditional rural types of heat, wood, oil and propane are not funded = cash on delivery.

CBC Thunder Bay: Hydro One calls for public input before possible rate increase in remote areas

- Hydro One has put in its application to the **Ontario Energy Board and will be holding a public meeting near the end of this month.**
 - HONI spokesperson: "Currently [for] remote customers, rates have been stable for about 10 years," she said. "In fact, they are lower than the rate of inflation."
- Would be an increase of 1.8 per cent which equates to \$1.55 on each monthly bill for the next five years.
- HONI's public consultation is tomorrow, Wed. Nov. 29.

CTV News Kitchener: Privatizing Ontario electricity companies would help lower rates: report

- Toronto Region Board of Trade makes recommendations aimed at changing the province's energy sector.
- Board CEO Jan De Silva said the one of the report's key recommendations is to privatize - by a maximum of 10 per cent initially -- portions of local hydro distribution companies which are now run by municipalities. This would lead to more innovation, more efficient operation and would benefit businesses and consumers.

- De Silva conceded the recommendation won't be popular because of the large public backlash to the provincial privatization of Hydro One
- De Silva stressed that the board is hearing from its members that thousands of manufacturing jobs are heading to neighbouring jurisdictions which have cheaper hydro prices.
- The report also calls for reform of the provincial electricity pricing system, including changing how price increases are communicated numerous times every year.
- The report also recommends that cap and trade costs should be broken out and explained clearly in electricity bills. That runs counter to an Ontario Energy Board ruling in 2016 which said the costs would not be reported on a separate line on a consumer's bill for natural gas, which is used to heat most homes in the province.

[North Bay: NDP trying to introduce uniform gas pumps](#)

- The New Democrat has introduced a Private Member's Bill where the Ontario Energy Board would regulate gas prices weekly across Ontario.
- NDP MP Bisson says consumers get hit with huge price gas differentials even within the same region and there's no reason for this.
- Bisson says right now prices fluctuate even though the price of a barrel of oil is fairly constant.

Morning News Clippings

powered by: **infomart**

Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017

Edited by: Paul Crawford (Paul.Crawford@oeb.ca)

[Contact Editor](#)

Clippings Summary

News - 25 Results



Collingwood to receive more than \$11.8 million if hydro sale approved

Collingwood Connection - Mon Nov 27 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ad Value: \$731

Reach: 20099 Page: 1

If the sale of **Collus PowerStream** is approved, the Town of Collingwood could be more than \$11.8 million richer. The municipality held a **public** meeting on Nov. 23 to discuss the sale of the local ...



NDP trying to introduce uniform gas pumps - My West Nipissing Now

www.mywestnipissingnow.com - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

[Permalink](#)

West Nipissing and northern residents might see some uniformity at the pumps if Timmins-James Bay MPP Gilles Bisson has his way. The New Democrat has introduced a Private Member's Bill where the Ontario Energy Board would regulate gas prices ...



Regional Financial Assistance to Heat Homes on the Rise News Centre News

www.bayshorebroadcasting.ca - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Permalink

Paul Crawford noted on Tuesday, November 28, 2017
OEB is mentioned.

The United Way of Bruce Grey reports an increase in the number of households requesting financial support for non-electrical or non-natural gas heat sources.



Hydro One calls for public input before possible rate increase in remote areas | CBC News

www.cbc.ca - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Permalink

Hydro One customers who live in remote communities in northwestern Ontario could soon see a rate increase on their monthly bills starting from May of next year.



Privatizing Ontario electricity companies would help lower rates: report | CTV Kitchener News

kitchener.ctvnews.ca - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Permalink

One of the largest chambers of commerce in Canada is calling for wider privatization of electricity distribution companies to increase competitiveness in an attempt to drive down costly Ontario electricity prices over the long-term.



There is mush to this platform; Details lacking in plan from Ontario Tories

National Post - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Andrew Coyne

Ad Value: \$11,131

Reach: 159480 Page: A4

Over four provincial elections and three leaders, the **Ontario** Progressive Conservatives have vacillated between mush (Ernie Eves), mush with indigestible lumps (John Tory), hard-faced mush (Tim Hudak) and in the last attempt, something ...



Patrick Brown's fiscally risky, economically dubious plan for Ontario

The Globe and Mail - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: BARRIE McKENNA

Ad Value: \$16,906
Reach: 309154 **Page:** B4

Give **Ontario** Progressive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown full marks for salesmanship with his "People's Guarantee" election manifesto. The 147-promise program, unveiled over the weekend, is loaded with new spending and tax breaks for ...



Brown's plan to beat Wynne? Be Wynne

Ottawa Sun - Tue Nov 28 2017
Tone: **Negative**
Byline: Jerryagar

Ad Value: \$1,086
Reach: 45442 **Page:** A15

Over the weekend, Patrick Brown, leader of the PC Party of **Ontario**, came up with a promise for everybody. There were 147 promises, to be exact. You get a promise and you get a promise and you get a promise. All I wanted was for Brown ...



Back to the centre for PCs; Patrick Brown

Toronto Star - Tue Nov 28 2017
Tone: **Positive**
Ad Value: \$12,366
Reach: 361323 **Page:** A14

Good on Patrick Brown and his Progressive Conservatives for spelling out in considerable detail what they intend to do if they win next June's provincial election. We (and many others) have been calling on the PCs for months now to let us in on ...



Promises, Promises; Ontario's Tories offering all things to all people with their new election platform

Ottawa Sun - Tue Nov 28 2017
Tone: **Negative**
Byline: David Reevely

Ad Value: \$2,779
Reach: 45442 **Page:** A10

With their new election platform, the Progressive Conservatives are the party to beat in **Ontario** in 2018, if the spring election is to be judged according to who promises to stuff more goodies into your pockets. Under Patrick Brown, the ...



PC leader's rivals critique election plan

Toronto Star - Tue Nov 28 2017
Tone: **Neutral**
Byline: Robert Benzie Toronto Star

Ad Value: \$5,980
Reach: 361323 **Page:** A6

Patrick Brown's political rivals warn that Ontarians need to read the fine print on the Progressive Conservative's new "People's Guarantee" election platform. The 78-page Tory manifesto boasts 147 promises, including lower middle-income tax ...



Brown vows five sacred undertakings

Toronto Star - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Martin Regg Cohn

Ad Value: \$25,950

Reach: 361323 Page: A6

The pride and joy of the next Progressive Conservative campaign is the People's Guarantee. Never mind the Ten Commandments. In a **public** oath-taking before 1,500 of the party faithful, PC leader Patrick Brown vowed to deliver on five ...



At last, an antidote to Grits'Kool-Aid

Ottawa Sun - Tue Nov 28 2017

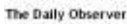
Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Markbonokoski

Ad Value: \$2,696

Reach: 45442 Page: A11

When that nasty Mike Harris unveiled his Common Sense Revolution in 1995 as leader of Ontario's Progressive Conservatives, he made it clear there would be no gain without pain. The province needed serious fiscal surgery and, like most major ...



Ontario PCs look like Liberals - only smarter

Daily Observer (Pembroke) - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Randall Denley

Ad Value: \$480

Reach: 6045 Page: A5

The new **Ontario** Progressive Conservative platform unveiled on the weekend is a pleasant surprise, not because it is full of brilliant **public** policy, but because it is a politically astute **plan** that gives the ...



Ww li Technology

Toronto Sun - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Steve Mcglennon

Ad Value: \$457

Reach: 171076 Page: A16

Re "Pre-paid **hydro plan** repugnant" (Editorial, Nov. 24): Growing up in England, my grandmother had a box on the wall. It was a pre paid "lecky box" in which we would insert 10 pence coins in order to have toast and tea in the ...



Leader of Ontario Progressive Conservative Party Patrick Brown in Port Hope

Northumberland News - Mon Nov 27 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Ad Value: \$352

Reach: 22800 Page: 1

PORT HOPE - The leader of the **Ontario** Progressive Conservative Party, Patrick Brown, is visiting Port Hope on Monday evening. Coming off his recent platform announcement, a "People's Guarantee," Brown will be at Port Hope High School, ...



Darlington nuclear positioning to produce more than energy

Clarington This Week - Thu Nov 23 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Ad Value: \$70

Reach: 51805 Page: 1

CLARINGTON - The Darlington Nuclear Generating Station could soon be not just producing **energy** but also creating isotopes for the health care and science sectors, visitors to the ninth annual Clarington **Energy** Summit heard ...



Flipping the switch on customer service; Hydro One says they are changing how they do business to better serve their customers

Woodstock Sentinel-Review - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Heather Rivers

Ad Value: \$491

Reach: 7920 Page: A3

Hydro One brass touched down in the Friendly City Monday in an effort to overhaul the public's negative perception of the provincial **utility** giant. "We're here to do business and focus on the **customer** and ...



Pipeline deal reached; Line 5 under St. Clair River to be replaced under agreement signed between Michigan, Enbridge

Sarnia Observer - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Paul Morden

Ad Value: \$611

Reach: 12173 Page: A1 / Front

A pipeline crossing beneath the St. Clair **River** will be replaced under an agreement signed Monday between Enbridge and the State of Michigan. The deal follows months of debate in Michigan over the potential environmental risk from a ...



Groundwater expert sees reason for investigation

Today's Farmer - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Jeffrey Carter

Ad Value: \$1,088

Page: A15

Chatham-Kent residents have repeatedly asked the Ministry of Environment and **Climate** to test their contaminated wells for heavy metals. That hasn't happened, despite science pointing to potential health concerns related to the Kettle ...



Turbine controversy in rural Ontario isn't gone yet

Today's Farmer - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Peter Epp

Ad Value: \$316

Page: A4

When Premier Kathleen Wynne announced 14 months ago that her government

was suspending Ontario's **renewable energy** procurement process, she and her Liberal colleagues were caught in the middle of a **public** backlash ...



World's biggest battery to be ready this week in Australia; World's biggest battery to be ready this week in Australia

Broadcast news - Mon Nov 27 2017
Tone: **Positive**

CANBERRA, Australia - An official says Tesla Inc. chief executive Eon Musk is on track to deliver on a promise to build the world's biggest lithium-ion battery in the Australian Outback within 100 days. Musk promised to build the 100-megawatt ...



Can we talk climate?

National Post - Tue Nov 28 2017
Tone: **Negative**
Byline: Joe Oliver

Ad Value: \$12,027
Reach: 159480 Page: FP11

For the past two years, the federal Liberal government has incessantly proclaimed to Canada and the world its passionate commitment to fighting **climate change**. The reception has been mixed. Recently, Prime Minister Justin ...



TransCanada Asks Nebraska to Reconsider Keystone XL Route Ruling - Bloomberg Quint

www.bloombergquint.com - Tue Nov 28 2017
Tone: **Neutral**
Permalink

Paul Crawford noted on Tuesday, November 28, 2017
Energy East is mentioned.

Keystone XL's future remains clouded a week after Nebraska said TransCanada Corp. must change the pipeline's route in the state. Now, the company is asking the state to let it address questions raised in the ruling.



The Trials of Kinder Morgan | Watershed Sentinel

watershedsentinel.ca - Mon Nov 27 2017
Tone: **Neutral**
Permalink

Paul Crawford noted on Monday, November 27, 2017
Energy East is mentioned.

In September, China's Vice-Minister of Industry and Information technology announced that his country would set a deadline for automakers to end sales of fossil-fuel-powered vehicles. The precise timing is to be determined, but to use that most ...

Clippings Summary

Full Articles



Collingwood to receive more than \$11.8 million if hydro sale approved

Collingwood Connection - Mon Nov 27 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Ad Value: \$731

Reach: 20099 Page: 1

If the sale of **Collus PowerStream** is approved, the Town of Collingwood could be more than \$11.8 million richer.

The municipality held a **public** meeting on Nov. 23 to discuss the sale of the local **utility** company to **EPCOR**, a billion-dollar **utility** company owned by the city of Edmonton. About 30 people attended the session with a large number being council members and town staff.

According to a presentation on Nov. 23, Collingwood will receive \$11.88 million for the 50 per cent stake in **Collus PowerStream**, as well as \$200,000 toward transaction costs and a \$150,000 donation toward the Waterfront Master **Plan**.

The town is also expected to receive 50 per cent of adjustments (an estimated \$750,000) and 50 per cent of cash at closing.

EPCOR has committed to an employment and location guarantee for employees for two years, as well as a 25-year lease for the **utility** operations **centre**, which will see the town receive \$216,000 per year in rent fees.

Town **energy** lawyer Mark Rodger said **EPCOR** will cover all existing debt obligations, and Collingwood will not make any contribution toward **EPCOR**'s transaction costs.

The company has also applied for a one per cent **rate** decrease and a **rate** freeze for five years with the **Ontario Energy Board** (**OEB**)

The deal is still pending **OEB** approval, which Rodger said could take anywhere from three months to a year.

However, Rodger is also involved in the sale of **Orillia Power Distribution** to **Hydro** One, which approved in October, 2016, has been upheld by the **OEB**.

This deal has a similar **rate** freeze clause as the proposed Collingwood deal and the board is concerned this could lead to higher **rates**. According to a procedural order filed in July 27 and obtained by simcoe.com, the **OEB** has concerns over potential **rate** increases.

"Having reviewed these submissions, the **OEB** has determined that the hearing of this **application** will be adjourned until the **OEB** renders its decision on **Hydro** One's **distribution rate application**," the document said. "The **OEB** has determined that **Hydro** One should defend its cost allocation proposal in its **distribution rate application** prior to the **OEB** determining if the **Orillia** acquisition is likely to cause harm to any of its current customers. The **OEB**'s determinations in the **Hydro** One **rate** case will be determinative of how customers impacted by acquisitions are to be treated."

Rodger said the **OEB** uses the "no harm" test when approving these transactions, which asks whether this transaction would do any harm to costumers.

Rodger said **Orillia** and **Hydro** One have both filed motions to **review** the decision to hold up the approval.

"In the **Orillia** situation, the board is wondering if **Hydro** One's current **distribution rate** before the board may foretell what will happen in **Orillia**'s

rates," he said.

"The fact is, they're not related. We think the OEB has misjudged the situation."

Rodger said in his more than two decades in dealing with these types of transactions, the Collus PowerStream - EPCOR sale has been the most complicated he's ever dealt with.

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NDP trying to introduce uniform gas pumps - My West Nipissing Now

www.mywestnipissingnow.com - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

West Nipissing and northern residents might see some uniformity at the pumps if Timmins-James Bay MPP Gilles Bisson has his way. The New Democrat has introduced a Private Member's Bill where the Ontario Energy Board would regulate gas prices weekly across Ontario.

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Regional Financial Assistance to Heat Homes on the Rise News Centre News

www.bayshorebroadcasting.ca - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

The United Way of Bruce Grey reports an increase in the number of households requesting financial support for non-electrical or non-natural gas heat sources.

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Hydro One calls for public input before possible rate increase in remote areas | CBC News

www.cbc.ca - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Hydro One customers who live in remote communities in northwestern Ontario could soon see a rate increase on their monthly bills starting from May of next year.

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Privatizing Ontario electricity companies would help lower rates: report | CTV Kitchener News

kitchener.ctvnews.ca - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

One of the largest chambers of commerce in Canada is calling for wider privatization of electricity distribution companies to increase competitiveness in an attempt to drive down costly Ontario electricity prices over the long-term.

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There is mush to this platform; Details lacking in plan from Ontario Tories

National Post - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Andrew Coyne

Ad Value: \$11,131

Reach: 159480 Page: A4

Over four provincial elections and three leaders, the **Ontario** Progressive Conservatives have vacillated between mush (Ernie Eves), mush with indigestible lumps (John Tory), hard-faced mush (Tim Hudak) and in the last attempt, something approaching conservatism, only without the math: narrowly leading at mid-campaign, Hudak threw it away with a mix of implausible happytalk (the "million jobs" platform promise) and polarizing shock-talk (removing 100,000 employees from the **public** sector payroll). They lost again, as they had lost the previous three times.

True to form, rather than refine its message while remaining faithful to its core convictions, the party has remade itself yet again. With the next election just seven months away, and the party holding onto a reduced but still comfortable lead in the polls, it is Back to Mush. In fairness, a belief in mush - mush for mush's sake - may perhaps be the party's most sincere conviction: certainly it can't claim any **greater** record of electoral success with it than with the alternative. Perhaps it is simply a calculation that mush is what people want now: Mush in Our Time.

At any **rate**, the result is a 79-page platform, or "People's Guarantee," of such iridescent vapidness it might have better been titled Nothing To See Here. The tag line, repeated on every page of the document, is Change That Works, I can only assume in an attempt at irony - because if there is one idea that is most powerfully communicated throughout it is that the Tories, under their impenetrably vacant leader Patrick Brown, would change next to nothing about how the province is governed.

Virtually everything the **Ontario** government is now doing after fourteen years of Liberal activism, including its very latest and least-considered extensions - raising the minimum wage, expanding rent controls, free drugs for under-25s, all-day kindergarten, the works - it would still be doing after four years under the Conservatives. By 2022, spending would be 1.8 per cent less than it is currently projected to be, which is to say 10.6 per cent more than it is now - though in fact the Conservatives cannot identify a single program they would cut, beyond a "value for money audit."

So while the platform is full of promises of the taxes it would cut, the prices it would slash, and the goodies it would distribute - usually dressed up, with the duplicity now in vogue, as tax credits - it is vastly less interested in discussing how any of this would be done, still less how it would be paid for.

So: **electricity** prices would be cut "an additional" 12 per cent. That's pretty ambitious, considering the Liberals have promised to cut them 25 per cent. What sweeping reforms would a Progressive Conservative implement to the province's **electricity** market to make this possible? None that are mentioned, beyond cutting salaries for executives at the province's **power utilities**, renegotiating contracts with providers and redirecting a portion of the dividend that **Hydro One**, the province's **distribution** monopoly, pays the government annually.

That 25 per cent reduction, by the way, is under the Liberals' **Fair Hydro Plan**, widely and rightly derided as a shell game: the province is essentially borrowing to suppress prices now, at the cost of **greater** increases in later years. Among the fiercest critics of the **plan** at the time of its unveiling were the Progressive Conservatives. Yet it is now the baseline for their own plans.

The same is true of their broader fiscal program. The Liberals have gone to heroic lengths to produce a "balanced budget," even as the debt continues to mount. How? By moving more and more **public** debt off-book: the government's accumulated deficits, at \$193.5 billion, are now just 62 per cent of its total net debt, at \$311.9 billion. Yet the Tories propose, not only to do nothing to reduce this debt, the largest of any sub-national government in the world, but to run a deficit to boot. Of course, it would only be a small one, and only temporary. You may have heard that one before.

If the Tories would undo very little of what the Liberals have done - replacing **cap-and-trade** with a carbon tax is the only change of any real significance - most of what they would do would not be out of place in a Liberal, or even NDP, platform. A tax credit for child care; a \$5-billion subway-building scheme; free dental care for the old and poor: it's not that these are bad ideas (well, the subway **plan** is bonkers). It's just that they are not situated in a larger vision that represents any alternative to the statist quo.

What would a Conservative government do about the province's lumbering state health care monopoly, and the massive waiting lists that plague it? Well, it would "reduce hospital and emergency room wait times." Yes, but how? Spend more money - sorry, "make proper investments" - is the closest we get to an answer.

What would it do about the alarming deterioration in **student** performance within the elephantine bureaucratic-union complex that is the province's education system? Well, it would "take concrete steps" to improve math test scores. Yes, but how? Make teachers study math. Golly.

It's pretty much all in this vein: to the extent it has any policies, they are invariably simplistic, cost-free, and unassailably popular, with no one disturbed or put out in any way. Once, the Conservatives promised to abolish corporate welfare. Now they pledge only to punish corporations that take the subsidy and run. Once, they might have promised to roll back rent controls. Now, there is only a **review** of the Residential Tenancies Act. Once, they might have taken the partial privatization of **Hydro** One further, and sold off the rest. Now the dividend redistribution scheme is touted as a way to prevent any future government from privatizing it.

Perhaps this calculated triviality will make it more likely they will be elected. But what possible difference would it make if they were?

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Patrick Brown's fiscally risky, economically dubious plan for Ontario

The Globe and Mail - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: BARRIE McKENNA

Ad Value: \$16,906

Reach: 309154 Page: B4

Give **Ontario** Progressive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown full marks for salesmanship with his "People's Guarantee" election manifesto.

The 147-promise program, unveiled over the weekend, is loaded with new spending and tax breaks for virtually everyone. There are billions of dollars for health care, subways, **hydro** rebates and even free WiFi on GO trains, plus tax reductions for individuals, small businesses and a smattering of special interests.

"With our platform, you will pay less and you will get more," Mr. Brown vowed.

And it even comes with a guarantee: if he doesn't deliver on his main

commitments, Mr. Brown said he wouldn't stick around for a second term as **Ontario** premier.

To hammer the point home, he signed a written pledge before roughly 1,500 cheering delegates at a party convention in **Toronto** on Saturday.

The problem with the "People's Guarantee" is that it's a bit too clever, fiscally risky and economically incoherent.

That's unfortunate because there are some good things in the platform, including a substantial investment in mental-health care and lower tax **rates** for individuals, particularly middle-income earners.

Running against two parties that are to his political left, Mr. Brown is strategically putting the progressive banner in the store window and soft-peddalling his more conservative side.

But he's relying on a little fiscal sleight of hand by seemingly promising both lower taxes and higher spending. The platform would actually add \$2.8-billion to the provincial deficit in 2018-19, before generating savings in subsequent years, according to a one-page fiscal **plan** contained in the document.

Yes, he's lowering taxes for individuals, small businesses and offering a few special-interest credits, (winter tires, child care and arts and fitness). But he's partly offsetting the cost of these breaks by scrapping **Ontario's** \$1.9-billion-a-year **cap-and-trade** program and embracing the more expensive federal carbon-tax **plan**. New carbon taxes would instead raise \$2.4-billion a year.

Overall, provincial tax revenues will rise to \$167.8-billion by 2021-22, from \$151.9-billion in 2018-19, under Mr. Brown's **plan**. Collectively, we'll all be paying more.

On the spending side, Mr. Brown is heavily relying on what he calls "a value-for-money audit" to reduce government waste. The audit would lower government spending by 2 per cent, saving the government nearly \$3-billion a year, according to the party's costing estimates. But there are no details.

The bottom line is that without higher carbon taxes and the nebulous audit savings, Mr. Brown's **plan** would actually swell **Ontario's** deficit and add to its already hefty \$300-billion-plus debt.

There is also a bit of economic incoherence to Mr. Brown's platform, particularly on the **climate** side. He's embracing a carbon tax, which is designed to get people to use less **energy**. But he's doubling down on the Liberals' politically motivated **hydro** rebates. The result will make driving a car more expensive and heating a home cheaper, sending contradictory signals to consumers about their **energy** use.

Meanwhile, the platform talks about the problem of industrial and corporate **electricity rates** that are among the most expensive in **North** America. But it's vague about what to do about the problem. The cost of **electricity** is one of a raft of competitive challenges facing **Canadian** companies, which are already grappling with uncertainty over the possible demise of the **North** American free-trade agreement.

Consumers can't easily just up and leave **Ontario** because they don't like what they're paying for **electricity**. Businesses can, taking tens of thousands of good jobs with them.

Mr. Brown's platform also lowers the small-business tax **rate** by another percentage point, beyond what the Liberals have already promised. This perpetuates the misguided notion that preferential **rates** encourage small business to create jobs, grow and all sorts of virtuous things.

They don't. The lower **rates** create a perverse incentive for small companies to remain small as they strive to avoid the higher tax **rate** that larger businesses face, according to research by the International Monetary Fund. Many small businesses are self-employed individuals or professionals, such as doctors, who use their **corporation** as an investment vehicle to defer tax until retirement or to split income with a spouse.

Canada's current tax regime is already hugely generous to small businesses, and Mr. Brown would tilt the balance even more so to curry favour with a key constituency.

Mr. Brown is promising **Ontario** voters "more for less." If he wins, they could just as easily **wind** up with more - for more.

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Brown's plan to beat Wynne? Be Wynne

Ottawa Sun - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Jerryagar

Ad Value: \$1,086

Reach: 45442 **Page:** A15

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There were 147 promises, to be exact.

You get a promise and you get a promise and you get a promise.

All I wanted was for Brown to come out on stage, point to a picture of Premier Kathleen Wynne and say, "I'm not her."

But instead, he was sort of her.

By which I mean he promised to lower **hydro** bills even more, institute a carbon pricing scheme, run a deficit, pay for child care without getting rid of all-day kindergarten babysitting, and go along with increasing the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

Brown seems to be trying hard not to look like Mike Harris or Stephen Harper - the real conservatives.

Why make 147 promises? Even when we get married, we basically promise to be good and faithful.

Two promises. That's it.

Not complicated.

But it seems the way to get elected in **Ontario** is to promise everybody everything.

Fiscal conservatism, sensible prioritizing and paying down debt (significantly) are just not salable concepts in **Ontario**.

To be **fair**, Brown did highlight five main promises. Let's **review** them. 1. 22.5% lower income taxes for the middle class. That's good, as the middle class pays a lot in tax, but mostly fails to qualify for assistance to pay for the things they need with what they have after tax. 2. 75% refund of child care expenses. Fine, but what about all day kindergarten, which is paid day care for rich people as well as poor? If low-income people are getting day care paid for, they don't need both, and rich people don't need either. Besides, the Liberals are already

subsidizing day care providers to make up for minimum wage increases. Brown's policy is just vote buying. 3. 12% more off your **hydro** bill. Brown says he can do that by working our way out of the **Green Energy Act** and by getting out of contracts where possible, which is an improvement over Wynne. But what about his carbon pricing scheme? He says it will be revenue neutral, but he means to government. Good luck having that work out for you. 4. Largest provincial mental health care commitment in **Canadian** history. We desperately need better health care in all areas. Wait times are among the worst in the world. But it will cost a lot. That is as good a reason as any to find serious savings elsewhere, but I don't see Brown doing that. We need priorities set, but like Wynne, Brown is promising the sky. Lah, dee dah, tomorrow's another day and we'll pay for it then. 5. First-ever Trust, Integrity, and Accountability Act. Well, that would be a change.

But then, as James Wallace wrote in the **Toronto** Sun, "the Liberals are a party that has wallowed in scandal, wasted billions canceling **gas** plants for political gain, billions more overpaying for self-serving green schemes, been embroiled in corruption proceedings, whose premier refers to broken promises as stretch goals and has, like no government in recent history, left ruin and hardship in its wake."

So even if Brown's policies are Wynne-like, a decade and a half of the Liberals is more than enough.

It is just sad to see that no one seems to believe fiscal conservatism can win in **Ontario**.

What can Brown do for you? Agar hosts the 9 a.m. to noon show on NEWSTALK1010 jerry.agar@sunmedia.ca @jerryagar1010

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Back to the centre for PCs; Patrick Brown

Toronto Star - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Ad Value: \$12,366

Reach: 361323 Page: A14

Good on Patrick Brown and his Progressive Conservatives for spelling out in considerable detail what they intend to do if they win next June's provincial election.

We (and many others) have been calling on the PCs for months now to let us in on their plans. Six months away from the vote, it's high time to give voters an idea what sort of alternative they'll be offering to Premier Kathleen Wynne's Liberals.

There were two big surprises in Brown's announcement over the weekend of his "People's Guarantee" for the spring campaign.

First, it was remarkably comprehensive - five major commitments and scores of other small-bore promises ranging from a **rebate** on winter tires to Wi-Fi on GO trains.

Second, it drags the PC party from the right back to the **centre** of **Ontario** politics, where elections are won, with promises of help for families struggling with child-care costs, a middle-class tax cut and major spending on mental health.

There's no red meat for the party's social-conservative wing. And there's no talk of chain gangs or mass firings of government workers, the sort of things that torpedoed Tim Hudak's campaigns in 2011 and 2014.

The Tories under Brown have clearly learned the lesson that you can't find a majority of **Ontario** voters over on the far-right. They had to lose four straight elections to the Liberals, but it finally seems to have sunk in.

Of course, there's plenty of the usual sort of political flim-flammy in Brown's **plan**. The so-called "guarantees" are anything but. There would be plenty of room for a future Tory government to fudge the results if necessary and claim it met its key promises. It's good political marketing, nothing more.

There's also a clever bit of fiscal manoeuvring at the heart of the PC **plan**. It highlights a cut in personal income taxes for lower- and middle-income people - a guaranteed vote-getter. At the same time, the Tories would have **Ontario** join the federal carbon tax, which they estimate would raise \$340 million in 2019-20, rising sharply to \$2.4 billion by 2021-22.

So a supposedly tax-cutting Tory government would actually be extracting more overall from **Ontario**'s taxpayers, as government revenues would continue to rise.

Even more counterintuitively, the penny-pinching PCs would deliberately run up a \$2.8-billion deficit in their first year, after the allegedly profligate Liberals ground it down to zero. The world, it seems, is upside-down.

Having said all that, though, much of what Brown is offering is admirable.

The promised \$1.9 billion in additional spending over 10 years on a comprehensive **plan** for mental health is badly needed, and just the sort of thing that the Wynne Liberals might well have pushed. Ditto adding 100,000 child-care spaces and establishing a dental **plan** for low-income seniors.

Reducing **hydro rates** even more will be popular, and using the province's \$350-million dividend from its share in the privatized **Hydro** One to help do that makes sense, too. (In fact, as the PCs acknowledged, the Star suggested just that idea and the Tories borrowed it. You're welcome.)

The PCs are also on the right track with their proposal to make subways a provincial responsibility, and put \$5 billion more into building them. That kind of **transportation** is increasingly a **regional** issue and would be better handled by a **regional** authority. More on that later this week.

Much can happen in the next six months. By next June, the Liberals will have been in office for 15 years, and it will be difficult to keep that streak going. But the PCs have their own issues (including nasty internal divisions between centrists and far-right-wingers) and could sabotage their own campaign once again.

Still, Brown has put forward a serious **plan** that will deserve serious consideration from voters. Next spring's campaign is shaping up as a real contest of ideas.

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Promises, Promises; Ontario's Tories offering all things to all people with their new election platform

Ottawa Sun - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: Negative

Byline: David Reevely

Ad Value: \$2,779

Reach: 45442 **Page:** A10

With their new election platform, the Progressive Conservatives are the party to beat in **Ontario** in 2018, if the spring election is to be judged according to who promises to stuff more goodies into your pockets.

Under Patrick Brown, the Tories have been transforming into a party of the left.

With their "People's Guarantee", signed dramatically by their leader at their weekend convention in **Toronto**, there's no going back before Election Day.

The only thing the Liberals are spending on that the Tories wouldn't is the environment: They'd scrap a couple of billion dollars a year in spending to avert **climate** change.

They'd actually collect even more money from charging for carbon emissions - via a much broader carbon tax administered by the federal government, rather than the Liberals' existing **cap-and-trade** system - but they'd give those revenues back in income-tax cuts.

(Stéphane Dion promised to do substantially that when he was federal Liberal leader a decade ago. The federal Conservatives derided it as a "permanent tax on everything" and all but called him a communist.

Now it's Progressive Conservative policy.)

So that's a bunch of things like retrofitting social-housing buildings and schools to make them more **energy** efficient, subsidizing greener industry, and sending money to cities for new bike routes. All zapped.

But pharmacare for young people? Keep it. Tuition cuts? They stay. Hiking the minimum wage? Slowed slightly but still being done.

Then add: A **public** dental **plan** for seniors, \$190 million a year more for mental health, new heart clinics in communities that don't have them and a new PET scanner to wheel around the **North**. A hundred new probation officers, plus 2,200 more corrections officers (200 more than the Liberals say they'll hire). More subway money for **Toronto**.

A \$500 tax credit for buying winter tires. A new provincial tax credit for putting your kids in soccer. Subsidized cell towers and broadband Internet in remote areas. A city parks fund! More loans to help tradespeople buy tools! Wi-Fi on GO trains! A Brown government would pay its share for the next stage of LRT construction here. It would also build the new **Ottawa** jail the Liberals promise - but, of course, sooner.

Because inexpensive car insurance is a birthright of all Ontarians, a Brown government would forbid insurers to charge different premiums based on where people live. Everyone would, by law, get the cheapest **rate**.

Because "it's time for a government that t cares about horseracing in **Ontario**," it says here, the Tories would create a new lottery with revenues going to racetracks. People are just not that interested in betting on horses, so of course the government must act.

Maybe you wonder how we'll pay for all this. The carbon-tax money is part of it, but not nearly enough.

The answer is magic money: unspecified savings in unnamed programs.

The Brown Tories would do a value-formoney audits on everything. This would be a labour-intensive, time-consuming process that would start paying off to the tune of billions right away.

"The value-for-money audit is conservatively estimated to find waste of less than 2 per cent of spending," the Tory platform says, or about \$2.8 billion a year within a couple of years. That's about the same as the budget for the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Should be easy to find.

(Also, the Tories would continue the financial gymnastics they accuse the Liberals of using to lie about the province's books. The Progressive Conservative platform clucks about the Liberals' fights with the auditor general Bonnie Lysyk over them, but that's all.)

The platform slaps the Liberals for selling 60 per cent of **Hydro One**, the **public power-transmission utility** that turned an annual profit and paid dividends to the government.

The Liberals sacrificed most of those year-in-and-year-out revenues (hundreds of millions a year) for a shot of cash for **public** works (billions, once).

"The sale of **Hydro One** was a reckless decision that sacrificed the province's long-term fiscal health, forfeited control over the **utility's** decisions and - without consultation - robbed the **Ontario** people of an asset that was rightfully theirs," the Tories say.

So, they say, they'll give the 40 per cent remaining of **Hydro One's** dividends back to **power** consumers as a **rebate** on our bills.

If giving up 60 per cent of the dividends was dangerously irresponsible for the treasury, giving up the other 40 per cent is an odd remedy. But it does get the Tories 4.7 percentage points of the way to cutting **hydro** bills by 11.7 per cent more than even the Liberals say they can.

Another big step in that direction, 2.9 percentage points' worth, is from simply transferring hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of **energy**-conservation programs from the **electricity** system's players to provincial taxpayers.

Same people paying - us - but lower bills in the mailbox.

It's hard to fault the Progressive Conservatives for giving up on trying to sell a conservative message after failing at it so consistently. They tried patrician managerialism under John Tory in 2007, Liberals-but-more-competentness under Hudak in 2011, and hard-edged conservative incompetence under Hudak version 2.0 in 2014. None of them worked.

Running as lefties is the one thing the Progressive Conservatives haven't tried yet in 15 years of losing elections to the Liberals, so what the hell. But if you're looking for actual conservatism in **Ontario**, keep searching.
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PC leader's rivals critique election plan

Toronto Star - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Robert Benzie Toronto Star

Ad Value: \$5,980

Reach: 361323 Page: A6

Patrick Brown's political rivals warn that Ontarians need to read the fine print on the Progressive Conservative's new "People's Guarantee" election platform.

The 78-page Tory manifesto boasts 147 promises, including lower middle-income tax **rates**, a 12-per-cent cut in **hydro rates**, writeoffs for child care and new spending on mental-health care.

Both the governing Liberals and the New Democrats said voters should take the glossy campaign magazine with a large grain of salt.

"Page 76 of their **plan** made it very clear: over \$12 billion is what's being cut

across the board to the people of **Ontario**. So the question becomes, what are you going to cut?" Finance Minister Charles Sousa said Monday.

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath argued the Tory **hydro** proposals aren't that different from the Liberals' **electricity** policies.

"Apparently, the Conservatives think this shows good **hydro** policy because they **plan** to continue the disastrous Liberal **hydro plan** if they win next year," Horwath said.

The New Democrats want to buy back the majority share of the **Hydro** One **transmission** the Liberals sold off. The Tories would, instead, **rebate** to **ratepayers** the dividends from the 49 per cent of shares still in **public** hands.

Horwath added that there is "a \$6-billion hole" in the PC **plan**.

While his election platform was the talk of Queen's Park, Brown was 450 kilometres away on the campaign trail, even though voters don't head to the polls until June 7.

"It's not your imagination; you have less disposable income. Thanks to the Liberals you are now poorer than the average **Canadian**," the PC leader said at a whistle-stop in the **Ottawa** suburb of Nepean.

"That is why an **Ontario** PC government would give you a raise, starting with cutting middle-income tax **rates** by 22.5 per cent," he said.

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Brown vows five sacred undertakings

Toronto Star - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Byline: Martin Regg Cohn

Ad Value: \$25,950

Reach: 361323 Page: A6

The pride and joy of the next Progressive Conservative campaign is the People's Guarantee.

Never mind the Ten Commandments. In a **public** oath-taking before 1,500 of the party faithful, PC leader Patrick Brown vowed to deliver on five sacred undertakings if he wins **power** in next year's provincial election:

Tax cuts. Childcare rebates. **Hydro** cuts. Mental health money. Accountability.

Should he fall short on any of them, our future premier shall forswear **power** forever more. If he can't deliver in his first term, he won't run for a second.

Thus did Brown sign his name with a flourish and pledge fidelity to his followers who had come from far and wide to bear witness at an airport convention **centre**. As for the rest of us, have faith, good people of **Ontario**, and ye shall be justly rewarded by Brown's government-in-waiting.

That's a promise. Guaranteed.

The People's Guarantee - or PG for short - is the PCs' ambitious centrepiece. But behold the subconscious subtext revealed shortly after Brown delivered himself of the party platform on stage:

"You Make Me!"

Those were the words - or more precisely, the lyrics - wafting across the hall in

not-so-sacred song played for the cheering partisans after Brown spoke. Made popular by Swedish DJ and remixer Avicii in 2013, the throbbing technobeat of "You Make Me" is no prayerful hymn.

Like Brown's 78-page party platform, Avicii's hit song has its own beat, measure, counterpoint and chorus: "We are one/One for sure/All united/You'll want some more/Oh-oh-oh-oh/You make me."

You get the idea. Party unity forms the written preamble, but winning popularity far and wide is the unspoken purpose.

Like the fully formed policies that emerged so suddenly after a long gestation, the focused theme song came as a surprise. For it is not just in words but song that Brown shall lead his hungry Tories from the political wilderness to the new Jerusalem next year at Queen's Park.

The little-known PC leader has remade himself - or as Avicii might say, remixed himself - as a progressive force in **Ontario** politics, with a dash of conservatism thrown in for good measure. And like Avicii in song, Brown likes to repeat himself in prose.

The word "change!" appeared at least 20 times in his speech, etched into his teleprompter and drummed into the ears of an audience thirsting for regime change.

You could feel it in the air as Progressive Conservative congregants thrilled to the upbeat music in the hall and thronged to the scent of **power** in the hallways. Thanks to strong polling numbers over the past year, Brown has attracted a remarkable 140,000 members to the party and recruited an impressive roster of new candidates for his presumed cabinet.

But the leader himself remains an unknown quantity and personality. Roughly half of all voters have no opinion of him, and those who think poorly of him now outnumber those who think well, according to the latest survey by Campaign Research - not in the same proportions as the unpopular Premier Kathleen Wynne, but worrisome all the same.

Without known policies, or a knowable personality, the party faced possible peril.

Randall Denley, who ran for the PCs in the last election, mused this month that under Brown his beloved party had endured "two years of drifting without a policy rudder," and lamented that his leader "has steered clear of ideas for so long that reasonable people might think he didn't have any."

Now, Brown has answered his critics - both within the party and outside the fold. The emperor no longer has no policies, just promises aplenty.

As I wrote on the weekend after Brown's big reveal, his Tories deserve credit for coming up with a comprehensive platform so early in the campaign season. And for submitting themselves to scrutiny by journalists, mockery by political rivals, and analysis by outside experts such as former parliamentary budget officer Kevin Page. At least voters can now judge the PCs on the strengths and weaknesses of policy, not just personality.

How does the "People's Guarantee" fit in with "You Make Me?"

More on the platform's fine print (and precise numbers) in future columns. Meanwhile, we leave you with the fine words that serenaded Brown and his true believers after the sermon from the mount, in hopes that all Ontarians might see the light - and feel some love for the leader:

"All my life, I've been/I've been waiting for someone like you, yeah ... You make me."

Martin Regg Cohn's political column appears Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.
mcohn@thestar.ca, Twitter: @reggcohn

The Star's View: back to the **centre** for PCs, A14

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At last, an antidote to Grits'Kool-Aid

Ottawa Sun · Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Markbonokoski

Ad Value: \$2,696

Reach: 45442 Page: A11

When that nasty Mike Harris unveiled his Common Sense Revolution in 1995 as leader of **Ontario's** Progressive Conservatives, he made it clear there would be no gain without pain.

The province needed serious fiscal surgery and, like most major operations, it was going to hurt.

The electorate bought in. Premier Bob Rae, the silkstockinged socialist leading the NDP, had the province so deep in debt that its famed economic engine was wheezing from lack of air, and jobs were dying off.

But Harris did what needed to be done, and he has been blamed ever since as the sonof-a-bitch responsible for everything that has gone wrong in **Ontario**, even extraordinary snow falls.

The province, however, is still not in the mood for another Harris. Over the weekend, PC leader Patrick Brown unveiled this party's platform for the 2018 provincial election, and wisely named it the People's Guarantee, both catchy and populist.

If he didn't deliver on his promises, he'd kiss his own career goodbye and not run for a second term.

At the advice of his sister, Brown got rid of the dorky haircut, put his mug on his manifesto's front page to signify ownership, and began issuing a whack of promises that would have the best NDPer salivating like a rabid dog - a 22.5% reduction in provincial income tax for the middle class, a further 12% cut in **hydro** bills, \$1.9 billion over 10 years on mental health, more nursing home beds for lowincome seniors, and a commitment to stem the flow of homophobic discrimination against the LGBTQ community.

What was not to love? Naturally, critics from the left are already denigrating Brown's guarantee, but it was Liberal **Transportation** Minister Steven Del Duca who stunk out the elevator over the weekend with the ill posterior **wind** of his own party's policies.

"You can get anything under the sun ... it's going to be sunshine and rainbows, just elect us," said Del Duca, chiding Brown's message but unwittingly reflecting the Liberals' very own playbook.

Remember how Dalton McGuinty got elected as Liberal premier on the back of one big promise - the promise not to raise taxes? It was a promise that lasted all of a nanosecond and, from that day onward, through 14 years of McGuinty and Kathleen Wynne, Ontarians have been lied to, robbed of billions, and routinely deceived by one of the most corrupt governments imaginable.

What Patrick Brown must do now is sell himself and his platform, yet keep Ontarians mad as hell at the Wynne Liberals for playing us all as thick-as-brick

dupes.

Ontarians must not get suckered again by Kathleen Wynne's nice old grandmother routine because there is nothing nice about her.

She's as cutthroat and self-serving a politician as they come.

What Brown must also do is control his campaign team and steer them clear of shooting themselves in the foot as Tim Hudak's handlers did in the 2014 election when they thought it would be both fun and politically profitable to announce at the 11th hour that the election of a PC government would see 100,000 civil **service** jobs immediately cut.

Oh, I remember it well, for I was a senior political staffer in the Hudak camp back then, and told anyone who would listen that such an announcement would be political suicide.

Hudak's deputy chief of staff told me to "stay the f—out of it!" And so I did. The rest was four more years of contempt for anyone who did not **drink** the Liberals' Kool-Aid.

It was a devastating blow for the Hudak **crowd**, but predictable.

Brown cannot make the same kind of mistake. [@MarkBonokoski](mailto:markbonokoski@gmail.com)

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Ontario PCs look like Liberals - only smarter

The Daily Observer

Daily Observer (Pembroke) - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Randall Denley

Ad Value: \$480

Reach: 6045 Page: A5

The new **Ontario** Progressive Conservative platform unveiled on the weekend is a pleasant surprise, not because it is full of brilliant **public** policy, but because it is a politically astute **plan** that gives the opposition party a better than even chance of winning next year's election. That's a first for this century.

The last few elections have conclusively shown that Ontarians prefer a **centre-**left government. Rather than grasping this, the PCs tied themselves in knots trying to figure out whether their problem was the leader or the campaign.

Really, the party was just trying to sell something people didn't want to buy. Tough medicine, of any sort, isn't popular in **Ontario**. We want governments that will do more and more for us.

PC Leader Patrick Brown gets that, and he has delivered, achieving the astounding feat of out-promising the Liberals while not breaking the bank to do it.

Brown cleverly neutralizes much of the Liberals' **plan** by adopting it. Like pharmacare for young people, a \$15 minimum wage, more child care and artificially deflated **power rates**? No problem, the PCs will give you all of that, and more. In effect, the PC **plan** lets voters choose the Liberals' most popular ideas, but without getting the Liberals themselves in the bargain. That will prove attractive.

The PC **plan** turns on Brown's carbon tax. He shocked and disappointed his own supporters when he supported such a tax back in 2016, but the electoral benefits were clear then and **even** clearer now. Brown's move brings his party in

line with popular thinking on **climate** change while creating the scope for a big income -tax cut.

Brown's platform ditches the Liberals' unpopular **cap-and-trade plan** and the \$1.9 billion in annual spending that goes with it. Instead, Brown will bring in a simpler carbon tax, one that will raise somewhat more revenue than the Liberal tax.

He will use that carbon revenue to help pay for what the party bills as a 22.5 per cent reduction in income taxes in the lower two brackets. That will be popular, but it's also solid conservative thinking to tax something you want less of, carbon, and reduce taxes on something you want more of, work.

Brown's spending **plan** also relies on \$2.8 billion in unspecified expense reductions. That will cause some fussing, but it's about two per cent of overall provincial program spending. Unless government is 100 per cent efficient, this can be achieved.

Like the early Stephen Harper, Brown is featuring five key promises. He has vowed to deliver on those promises or not seek a second term. It's a stunt that's creepily reminiscent of former premier Dalton McGuinty's pledge not to raise taxes, but Brown hasn't promised anything he can't do.

The money is there for his incometax cut. His additional reduction in **power rates** will be funded by returning the **Hydro One** dividend to **ratepayers**. His daycare subsidy will be enormously popular and isn't restricted to government-licensed centres. His promise of \$1.9 billion for mental health care is welcome and overdue. His promise of an act that is supposed to guarantee integrity in government is a gimmick designed primarily to underline a Liberal weakness.

Of his other promises, the most welcome is an accelerated schedule for the Liberals' recently promised increase in long-term care beds. The Liberals have ignored this need for years and expansion is desperately required.

As a campaign **plan**, the platform has much to recommend it. It will let PC candidates go door to door without feeling like they have doused themselves in **gasoline** and are looking for a light.

The Liberals have yet to make a solid point against this platform, instead claiming that the PCs are promising everything to everyone, a strategy that has worked well for the Liberals. Perhaps they will sue for theft of intellectual property. Randall Denley is an **Ottawa** commentator, novelist and former **Ontario** PC candidate. randalldenley1@gmail.com

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Ww li Technology

Toronto Sun - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Steve McGlennon

Ad Value: \$457

Reach: 171076 **Page:** A16

Re "Pre-paid **hydro plan** repugnant" (Editorial, Nov. 24): Growing up in England, my grandmother had a box on the wall.

It was a pre paid "lecky box" in which we would insert 10 pence coins in order to have toast and tea in the morning. How "progressive" of **Hydro One**, in conjunction with our esteemed "progressive" government of the day, to take us back to the Second World War with this "new" payment-up-front **plan**.

STEVE MCGLENNON

MIDLAND, ONT.

(It's back to the future with **Ontario**'s Liberal government!)

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Leader of Ontario Progressive Conservative Party Patrick Brown in Port Hope

Northumberland News - Mon Nov 27 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Ad Value: \$352

Reach: 22800 Page: 1

PORT HOPE - The leader of the **Ontario** Progressive Conservative Party, Patrick Brown, is visiting Port Hope on Monday evening.

Coming off his recent platform announcement, a "People's Guarantee," Brown will be at Port Hope High School, 130 Highland Dr., on Monday, Nov. 27 at 7 p.m. to speak to supporters.

At the Progressive Conservative policy convention on Nov. 25 in **Toronto**, Brown outlined the party's platform ahead of the provincial election.

Northumberland **Peterborough** South PC Party candidate David Piccini welcomes the **public** to the event.

"I'm excited to welcome Patrick to Port Hope, his first stop after announcing the People's Guarantee over the weekend. After months of consultation with people in our community, Patrick and I are excited to share our blueprint for real change that works for **Ontario**," said Piccini.

The 42nd **Ontario** general election is scheduled on June 7, 2018.

Highlights of the PC election platform:

Cut middle-class income taxes 22.5 per cent within four years

12 per cent more off **hydro** bills

Refund up to 75 per cent of child-care costs for lower-income households

\$1.9 billion over 10 years to boost mental health care

15,000 new nursing home beds within five years

\$5 billion for new subways in **Toronto**

Free dental care for low-income seniors

\$500 winter tire tax credit

Scrap the Drive Clean emissions program for cars, minivans, pickup trucks and SUVs

Moratorium on school closures

- With files from the **Toronto** Star

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Darlington nuclear positioning to produce more than energy

Clarington This Week - Thu Nov 23 2017

Tone: **Positive**

Ad Value: \$70

Reach: 51805 Page: 1

CLARINGTON - The Darlington Nuclear Generating Station could soon be not just producing **energy** but also creating isotopes for the health care and science sectors, visitors to the ninth annual Clarington **Energy** Summit heard on Wednesday, Nov. 22.

"That's super exciting. It blends our health care and our **energy**," said Sheila Hall, executive director of the Clarington Board of Trade, which organized the **energy** summit.

Greg Thede, director of business development and commercial services for **Canadian Nuclear Partners** (a subsidiary of the **Ontario Power Generation**), presented at the **energy** summit about producing various isotopes and converting **energy** byproducts that could reduce waste and increase revenue at Darlington.

"The CANDU reactor has a really great design to produce isotopes," said Thede.

He said the first to come to the Darlington station would likely be the production of helium 3 starting in 2019. Helium 3 is a byproduct of heavy water from the nuclear reactors. The stable, nonradioactive element can be used to improve lung imaging and in security detection devices used to screen people, vehicles and cargo.

Cobalt 60 is used to sterilize medical equipment in hospitals around the world and to irradiate foods to kill bacteria, moulds, parasites and insects. It's already being produced at the **Ontario Power Generation (OPG)** Pickering plant. **OPG** is considering outfitting Darlington reactors, starting with unit 3, with the equipment to produce the cobalt 60 isotope. That will require a significant investment, and will move ahead only when there is a solid business case for the production of cobalt 60, according to **OPG**.

Plutonium 238 is a radioisotope used for deep space exploration (i.e. the Mars Rover) and cannot be used for atomic **weapons**. **OPG** reactors are well-positioned to produce plutonium 238.

"It will be a number of years off, as we are actively seeking **customer** engagement," said Thede.

He added in the future his organization will be looking for other useful - and potentially marketable - isotopes and byproducts from **nuclear energy** generation.

"There's a large periodic table to look at," said Thede.

The ninth annual Clarington **Energy** Summit drew business owners, company representatives and University of **Ontario** Institute of Technology **students** to hear presentations on the theme of **transportation**, sustainability and innovation. The event featured presentations on the relationship between **energy** and **transportation**. It included a **review** of the highlights of the recently released Long Term **Energy Plan** from the **Ontario Ministry of Energy** and networking opportunities for the 70-plus attendees.

"We invite everybody to connect in our opportunity **fair** to do business with each other," said Bonnie Wrightman, Clarington Board of Trade manager of business development. "We are in the business of bringing people's hands together."

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Flipping the switch on customer service; Hydro One says they are changing how they do business to better serve their customers

Woodstock Sentinel-Review - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Heather Rivers

Ad Value: \$491

Reach: 7920 Page: A3

Hydro One brass touched down in the Friendly City Monday in an effort to overhaul the **public**'s negative perception of the provincial **utility** giant.

"We're here to do business and focus on the **customer** and community growth," explained Ferio Pugliese, executive vice-president of **customer** care and corporate affairs. "We want to let people know **Hydro** One is a different company and we're changing the way we do business. We're highly focused on being **customer**-centric and focusing on the **customer**."

The visit was part of the Get Local program, where **Hydro** One representatives go out and talk with members of the community.

"As people come and get the facts, they find that we can help them," he said.

Pugliese spoke at a Woodstock Chamber of Commerce event that drew local business leaders, a representative from the city's economic department and Oxford Warden David Mayberry.

"Our main concerns are that people understand the system and how costs are generated and what **Hydro** One is doing in the future," Pugliese said.

Pugliese said he is trying to educate the **public** and repair the **utility**'s relationship with its customers.

"There are still a lot of misconceptions," he said. "People still think we are a generation business, but we are a **transmission** and **distribution** company. We only represent 37 per cent of your bill on average."

Pugliese also fielded concerns over a **Hydro** One **application** for a **rate** increase of 2.9 per cent that is up for approval in 2018.

"The bulk of that is due to a decline in load," he said. "If the load goes down, we still have to pay for the infrastructure."

One of the main reasons people and businesses are using less **hydro** is due to **energy** conservation efforts, he said.

Hydro One also requires new infrastructure to replace aging poles, **wires**, insulators and transformers.

The **utility** recently opened several **customer service** offices across the province, including one located at 727 exeter rd. in **London**.

Visit www.HydroOne.com/GetLocal for more information.
HRivers@postmedia.com

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Pipeline deal reached; Line 5 under St. Clair River to be replaced under agreement signed between Michigan, Enbridge

Sarnia Observer - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Neutral**

Byline: Paul Morden

Ad Value: \$611

Reach: 12173 Page: A1 / Front

A pipeline crossing beneath the St. Clair **River** will be replaced under an agreement signed Monday between Enbridge and the State of Michigan.

The deal follows months of debate in Michigan over the potential environmental risk from a section of Enbridge's Line 5 oil and **gas** pipeline that crosses beneath the water in the Straits of Mackinac.

While the agreement calls for the state and the **Canadian** pipeline company to jointly study replacing the pipeline's Straits of Mackinac crossing, its St. Clair **River** crossing is to be replaced as soon as federal and state approvals are in place.

The 64-year-old Line 5 pipeline carries about 87-million litres of oil and **natural gas** from the **west** through Wisconsin and Michigan to Sarnia.

Environmentalists and some state and federal politicians in Michigan have called for it to be replaced or shut down since concern focused on the Straits of Mackinac crossing in the days following a 2010 spill of heavy crude from another Enbridge pipeline into a tributary of the Kalamazoo **River** in the state.

Loss of the pipeline would have a serious impact on refineries and petrochemical manufacturers in Sarnia's Chemical Valley.

"That will bring investment into the community and also continue to keep the product flowing to us," Sarnia Mayor Bradley said about the deal announced Monday.

He also said the deal is "a positive step" to resolve what has been a "very controversial" issue that generated a "negative image for Canada and for Enbridge over the last couple of years."

Enbridge knows its reputation was damaged by the 2010 spill, Bradley said.

"This, to me, is showing they're going to try to repair that relationship and build faith in the industry," he said.

"This is a solution that tries to deal with the very real environmental issues."

The settlement says that, by next June, three options will be evaluated for replacing Line 5's dual pipelines in the Straits of Mackinac.

Those options include a new pipeline in a tunnel under the straits, or one installed below the lakebed using horizontal directional **drilling**, or a new pipeline placed in a trench on the bottom of the crossing inside a secondary containment structure or system.

The deal calls for the St. Clair **River** crossing to be replaced using horizontal directional **drilling**.

The company and the state also agreed Line 5 will be temporarily shut down when adverse weather conditions create sustained waves higher than 2.4 metres.

Other provisions in the deal call for new safety measures to be put in place to

mitigate potential anchor strikes from ships.

"Business as usual by Enbridge is not acceptable, and we are going to ensure the highest level of environmental safety standards are implemented to protect one of Michigan's most valuable natural resources," Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder said in a statement.

"The state is evaluating the entire span of Enbridge's Line 5 pipeline and its future, but we cannot wait for the analyses to be completed before taking action to defend our waterways."

Enbridge said the deal moves toward a long-term solution to address the future of Line 5.

"We hope the agreement is a step in a positive direction to demonstrate our commitment to doing the right thing to serve Michigan and protect the waters of the Great Lakes," the company said. pmorden@postmedia.com

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Groundwater expert sees reason for investigation

Today's Farmer - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: Negative

Byline: Jeffrey Carter

Ad Value: \$1,088

Page: A15

Chatham-Kent residents have repeatedly asked the Ministry of Environment and **Climate** to test their contaminated wells for heavy metals.

That hasn't happened, despite science pointing to potential health concerns related to the Kettle Creek black shale bedrock in the area. Kevin Jakubec, spokesperson for the Water Wells First citizen's group, said the organization has paid for their own analysis.

"Our test results have come back. It's black shale," he said.

"When people see when government is looking to poison them, they lose faith in the system."

John Cherry, director of the groundwater research consortium at the University of **Guelph**, said black shale, under certain circumstances, can be a cause for concern.

"As a groundwater expert, though not as a piling expert, I would say this is worthy of a serious assessment. It is not worthy of being dismissed as being irrelevant," he said.

A study published in 2004 in the Journal of Arkansas Academy of Science concludes that the "potentially harmful metals" in black shale "are likely to present serious risk to human health."

A 1993 **review** of black shale, including Kettle Creek black, prepared for the Geological Survey of Canada, includes the following recommendations: "Prioritize black shale deposits in Canada according to their potential to impact the environment in a manner harmful to humans and wildlife. Factors to consider include: proximity of the black shale to population centres, potable water sources; and surface waters; extent of fracturing in the black shale; pyrite content; disruption the black shale by quarrying... and the fate black shale if disturbed."

According to the Test America Laboratories website, "Most regulations use total

metals results because it is often considered more conservative and protective."

Test America is a leading environmental testing firm in the United States.

For Dave Lusk, the contamination of his well water is obvious. He noticed a problem when he was taking a shower in mid-October. His water pressure started dropping and eventually his water system was clogged altogether.

Lusk, like other residents who've issued complaints, said the contamination only began after pile-driving operations for **turbine** construction in his neighbourhood began.

Lusk was also on hand when a pair of consultants hired by the proponents of the **North** Kent **Wind** project were taking water samples on November 7. It was during their visit that Lusk, the consultants, and an accompanying police officer noticed something strange happening at the wellhead. An unknown **gas** was pushing water up to the surface.

Lusk, who recorded the phenomena with his cell phone, said the event lasted for about a half hour.

"It smelled like industry. It didn't smell like water. My water has never smelt."

Lusk and upwards of 75 concerned residents attended a meeting at on November 7 where exasperation for the MOECC's lack of response to their concerns was repeatedly expressed.

Mark St. Pierre, who blames **wind** farm construction and operation for the contamination of his well near Mitchell's **Bay**, provided a copy of MOECC evaluation from a sample of his water taken in July.

Metals were not included in the evaluation but the presence of black shale in the water was deemed, by the ministry, to be a possibility.

While St. Pierre and others in the room are concerned the provincial government is ignoring their concerns, support for Water Wells First is growing. MPP Monte McNaughton, who's been advocating at the group for months was at the meeting, along with an area lawyer who put forward the name of a firm specializing in civil litigation, and several representatives of the area's indigenous community.

Another citizen's group, this one based in Wallaceburg, has recently been formed to address potential water impacts and other concerns from the proposed Otter Creek **Wind** Farm.

Activist Theodore Blackbird-John, a member of Idle No More, offered to organize support for Water Wells First from among indigenous communities in Southwestern **Ontario**, should the request be made. That should not be hard to do, he said, since native communities take water resources seriously. There are two main areas where residents believe their well water has been compromised in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, the former Township of Dover and the former Township of Chatham.

Two municipalities in neighbouring Lambton County were contacted concerning the cost of laying municipal water lines.

One of municipal employees said the cost of laying a mile of four-inch line runs around \$50,000 per mile, a figure that doesn't take into account related costs such as engineering studies and additional infrastructure. The other employee said the cost of laying municipal water lines in area of Chatham-Kent where wells have been compromised could easily run into the millions.

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Turbine controversy in rural Ontario isn't gone yet

Today's Farmer - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Peter Epp

Ad Value: \$316

Page: A4

When Premier Kathleen Wynne announced 14 months ago that her government was suspending Ontario's renewable energy procurement process, she and her Liberal colleagues were caught in the middle of a public backlash against skyrocketing electricity bills. Halting a costly plan that promoted wind turbine farms was a quick and convenient response to the government's naysayers. Indeed, Wynne's own energy minister admitted Ontario didn't need the electricity that would be produced by new turbines.

But there was a problem. Six months earlier, several wind turbine projects had been approved, and the September announcement didn't mean they would be cancelled. The contracts would be honoured. Ontario would be allowing the development of wind turbines to produce electricity that wasn't needed.

Among those projects are two in Chatham-Kent and another in Elgin County. One has become an enormous public relations problem for the Wynne government, while the other two have the potential to become the same.

The first project is almost complete; but the others should be halted before they begin.

The North Kent 1 wind project was mired in controversy even before Wynne announced suspension of the renewable program. A citizen group's initial worry that water wells would be fouled because of interference to the area's unique geology has since been justified. Construction activity has fouled and in some cases plugged 16 water wells. Residents with damaged wells have made arrangements to have clean water trucked into their property.

The problems at the North Kent 1 project have stirred up fears a few miles away, at the Otter Creek project near Wallaceburg.

Work has yet to begin, but residents are worried the same problems will affect their water quality. They're also worried proposed turbine towers, the tallest in Canada, will be erected in an important migratory bird flight path.

Local MPP Monte McNaughton wants Otter Creek halted.

"These turbines are being built to generate electricity we don't need, and they're only going to contribute to driving hydro prices even higher," the Progressive Conservative said last week.

In nearby Elgin County, meanwhile, residents in Dutton Dunwich continue to campaign against a wind farm that has yet to be built. Residents are particularly irked that in their 2014 municipal election, 84 per cent voted against their community becoming a wind farm host, and yet the Ontario government - in an act that can only be perceived as stupidity, arrogance or both - approved a wind project for Dutton Dunwich 16 months later.

Kathleen Wynne may have hoped rural Ontario's longheld discontent with the Green Energy Plan would be mostly forgotten by the June 2018 provincial election. But that's not about to happen as the remnants of that multi-billiondollar campaign, and its varied controversies, continue to be revealed.

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Can we talk climate?

National Post - Tue Nov 28 2017

Tone: **Negative**

Byline: Joe Oliver

Ad Value: \$12,027

Reach: 159480 Page: FP11

For the past two years, the federal Liberal government has incessantly proclaimed to Canada and the world its passionate commitment to fighting **climate** change. The reception has been mixed. Recently, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau insisted **climate** be included in NAFTA and TPP agreements, even though there is virtually no chance of a substantive commitment.

Stridency and fervour in Canada and elsewhere have not moved the dial on **public** ambivalence about the need for action. We need to tone down the rhetoric and have an honest discussion based on verifiable science and the financial implications of green policies. Remarkably, that conversation has not occurred, even though, if alarmists are to be believed, we are facing an existential threat to humanity, or needlessly ravaging the global economy, if skeptics are right. Instead, the favoured communication approach relies on exaggeration, scaremongering, insults and intolerance of dissent.

Trudeau praised the Governor General for expressing incredulity that people still deny a human role in global warming. In fact, the skeptical position is that science has not established the extent of the anthropogenic contribution. Environmental icon David Suzuki went further. He would incarcerate politicians and corporate executives who are wilfully blind to his **climate** change nostrums. California Governor Jerry Brown told the Pontifical Academy of Sciences that the world needs a **climate** "brain washing." A recent NBC News opinion piece argued there is a moral imperative to have fewer children because they contribute to carbon emissions, comparing childbirth to releasing a violent criminal from prison. Pace Barry Goldwater, extremism in the defence of the **climate** is considered no vice, and moderation in the pursuit of emission reduction is no virtue.

In the face of apocalyptic messages from government, media and the self-declared cognoscenti, a September **Ontario Science Centre** poll found that 47 per cent of Canadians think the science of global warming is unclear, up from 40 per cent last year. In America, while people feel **climate** change is a problem, most believe they will not be personally affected and, in any event, they are not prepared to pay to mitigate it. Nor would 61 per cent of Germans voluntarily fork over one euro cent to fund renewables. In the U.K., the Ipsos MORI poll shows a steadily declining concern about **climate** change since 2005, from 82 to 60 per cent. Meanwhile, global emissions are projected to increase two per cent this year. While governments may be talking the talk, they are not walking the walk. That may partially explain a contradiction at the heart of the warmist community. No one can be more certain of the scientific veracity or compelling morality of their jeremiad of impending global disaster. Despite that religious-like conviction, or perhaps because of it, believers react with insecurity, hostility and derision to any suggestion that deviates ever so slightly from the orthodoxy of **climate** catastrophe. That is the antithesis of scientific inquiry and rational debate. Ironically, it makes less likely a consensus needed to get things accomplished.

The catastrophists' justification is that since the problem is so urgent, they cannot afford to waste precious time debating what is "settled" science. However, inconvenient facts have seriously damaged their credibility and should have shattered their certainty. Although you will not see this much in the media, **climate** model projections have turned out to be exaggerated if not spectacularly wrong, the polar bear population is thriving, warming has gone on hiatus, and extreme events are not more frequent.

It's also mostly unmentionable but true that greenhouse **gas** emission

increases are very positive for agriculture and plant life. The bottom line is we simply do not know everything about climatology. Therefore, we should be modest about projections and highly cautious about inflicting multitrillion-dollar costs on the global economy, which would harm billions of people, especially the poorest.

And even if the extravagant **climate** claims were true, we should still evaluate the specific policies designed to deal with the crisis. After all, with the stakes so high, there is a compelling need to get it right. But decisionmakers are often determined to push ahead with costly initiatives, even if their impact on global temperature is predictably minuscule (see: the carbon tax and **cap and trade**). According to the International **Energy** Agency, Canada may forego up to \$600 billion in capital investments by 2040, a terrible loss to employment and growth. Pain without gain is indefensible, even for a great cause.

The global-warming faith community needs to stop shouting from its echo chamber and absorb some uncomfortable facts. Maybe then more people will listen and buy into the need for sacrifice. Or, against all odds, the believers might adopt an approach that better reflects the needs of Canadians and the economic and scientific knowns and unknowns. Unfortunately, we are probably condemned to a dialogue of the deaf, until we definitively confront environmental tragedy. Or don't.

Joe Oliver is the former minister of finance and minister of natural resources.

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TransCanada Asks Nebraska to Reconsider Keystone XL Route Ruling - Bloomberg Quint

www.bloombergquint.com - Tue Nov 28 2017
Tone: **Neutral**

Keystone XL's future remains clouded a week after Nebraska said TransCanada Corp. must change the pipeline's route in the state. Now, the company is asking the state to let it address questions raised in the ruling.

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The Trials of Kinder Morgan | Watershed Sentinel

watershedsentinel.ca - Mon Nov 27 2017
Tone: **Neutral**

In September, China's Vice-Minister of Industry and Information technology announced that his country would set a deadline for automakers to end sales of fossil-fuel-powered vehicles. The precise timing is to be determined, but to use that most Canadian of metaphors: we know where the puck is going.

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