

Queen's Park Today – Daily Report April 4, 2017

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Quotation of the day

“Today's results demonstrate that our market system here in Ontario is functioning as intended, and that businesses across the province are engaged in the market.”

Environment Minister Glen Murray celebrates the success of the province's first cap and trade auction

Today at Queen's Park

On the schedule

The House will convene at 9:00 a.m. to continue second reading debate on **Bill 87**, Protecting Patients Act.

In the afternoon, MPPs will begin third reading debate on **Bill 59**, Putting Consumers First Act. If passed, the bill would make it mandatory for home inspectors to be licensed, ban door-to-door sales of certain appliances and increase regulations on the payday loan industry.

Debates and proceedings

MPPs passed a motion requiring the Legislature to sing Oh Canada at the beginning of each month. It being the first sitting of day of April, the anthem was sung before question period.

In the afternoon MPPs resumed second reading debate on **Bill 87**, Protecting Patients Act.

In the park

Colleges Ontario held its annual lobby day with representatives from colleges from across the province.

Medical students were at Queen's Park to lobby Premier **Kathleen Wynne** on decreasing mental health wait times.

The Ontario Waterpower Association also had an MPP reception scheduled.

Toronto transit

Toronto Mayor **John Tory** used a Monday morning news conference to call on the province to step up with funding for the Downtown Relief Line (DRL) now that it has squashed the city's plan for funding the line using road tolls.

Tory said the DRL must be prioritized over other Metrolinx projects: "The Yonge line won't move an inch closer to Richmond Hill until we have shovels in the ground digging out that much needed subway relief line."

Transportation Minister **Steve Del Duca** said he is "not going to play political games with transit," but added "no provincial government in the history of Ontario has invested more in Toronto transit projects than the Kathleen Wynne Liberals."

Topics of conversation

- **Hazel McCallion**, the premier's advisor on GTHA issues, called on Premier Wynne to go back to the table with GTHA mayors before signing off on the proposed Greenbelt and regional growth plan. McCallion said Wynn's growth policies "will lead to an even greater housing affordability crisis by creating ground-related family housing only for the rich, while everyone else will be forced into apartments or condominiums."
- Attorney General **Yasir Naqvi** committed to releasing a fully funded provincial strategy on [fetal alcohol syndrome](#) before the next election.
- The province has ended its snapping turtle hunt indefinitely. Beginning April 1, it is illegal to hunt or trap snapping turtles, which are considered an at-risk species.
- A [young PC supporter](#) is self-publishing a book on the premier called *SWYNNDLE* that comes out next week.
- The Ministry of Transportation issued a Request for Proposals for the design, building and financing of a new transit hub at Kipling Station that will integrate GO Transit, the TTC and MiWay bus services.

Today's committee meetings

Standing Committee on Government Appointments

- Tuesday, April 4 at 9:00 a.m.
 - Room 2
 - The committee will consider the following appointments:
 - **Ehren Cory** as member of the Ontario Infrastructure and Lands Corporation
 - **Kathy Bardswick** as a member of Metrolinx

Standing Committee on Social Policy

- Tuesday, April 4 at 4:00 p.m.
 - Room 151
 - The committee will meet to consider **Bill 68**, Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act.
 - Representatives from the following organizations are scheduled to appear:
 - Ontario Home Builders' Association
 - Green Party of Toronto
 - Pattison Outdoor Advertising
 - The Toronto Party for a Better City

Today's events



April 4 at 8:00 a.m. — Etobicoke

Education Minister **Mitzie Hunter** will make an announcement at Silver Creek Pre-School, 65 Hartsdale Drive.



April 4 at 8:00 a.m. — Toronto

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** will participate in a fireside chat at the GLOBE Series Capital 2017 Summit at the Four Seasons Hotel.



April 4 at 10:00 a.m. — Etobicoke

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** will participate in a fireside chat at the Ontario Long Term Care Association Convention and Trade Show at the Toronto Congress Centre.

**April 4 at 10:00 a.m. — Toronto**

The Ontario Autism Coalition will release a new report on autism and education entitled “New Horizons,” which includes 64 recommendations for improving the educational outcomes of children with autism.

**April 4 at 12:00 p.m. — Toronto**

Transportation Minister **Steve Del Duca** will deliver a speech to the Canadian Club on “Building, Planning and Delivering 21st Century Transportation” at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel.

**April 4 at 12:00 p.m. — Toronto**

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** will hold a caucus meeting at Queen’s Park.

**April 4 at 12:30 p.m. — Toronto**

Accessibility Minister **Tracy MacCharles** will attend the National BIA Conference at the Westin Prince Hotel and make an announcement.

News briefs – Governmental

Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

The ministry announced that 100 per cent of available carbon credits were sold in the province’s first cap and trade auction on March 22. The province sold over 25 million allowances at the base price of \$18.08 and an additional 812,000 future (2020) allowances at \$18.07 each. In total the auction generated \$472 million in proceeds, which will be used for green investment projects. More details on the sale and a list of companies that purchased allowances is available [online](#).

Environmental groups and the California Air Resources Board praised the success.

PC leader **Patrick Brown** said the scheme is “bad for Ontario” and is causing businesses of all sizes to consider leaving the province for other jurisdictions.

Brown also said the sale of only 812,000 of the 3 million available future allowances means “Ontario businesses have very little confidence in the longevity of this expensive cap-and-trade experiment.”

Funding announcements

- The **Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development** announced a \$50 million investment in the province's publicly assisted colleges.
 - Of this, \$48 million is earmarked for capital funding for new equipment and student supplies and \$2 million will go towards improving access to education in the North.
- The **Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care** announced 15 new Health Technologies Fund grants totalling \$5.4 million.
 - Recipients include the designers of a device that provides home monitoring for patients who have undergone cardiac surgery and a software company that provides self-care tools to youth with mental health challenges.

News briefs – Non-governmental

Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

After the Ontario Liberal Party renewed calls for PC leader **Patrick Brown** to reveal his hydro policy plan, Brown told reporters it would be made public before the spring 2018 election, but backed away from earlier promises of releasing it this spring or next fall.

The PC Party nominated former Harper-era Conservative MP **Susan Truppe** as its candidate in London North Centre.

New Democratic Party of Ontario

NDP leader **Andrea Horwath** told reporters she has encouraged NDP MPP **Jagmeet Singh** to make his decision on whether to run for the federal NDP leadership "sooner than later."

On Brown's hydro plan, Horwath said it is "disappointing that the leader of the opposition is not prepared to be upfront with the people of Ontario." Horwath said Brown has been in politics for 17 years "but nobody knows what he believes or what his plans are, and that's worrisome."

Question period

PC lead off

Executive salaries

- PC leader **Patrick Brown** went after the premier over high salaries on the Sunshine List, including the \$1.2 million earned by Ontario Power Generation's CEO and the \$230,000 earned by the former president of UP Express in just three months.

- Brown asked why the government allows these offensive salaries when the average Ontarian cannot afford their hydro bills.
- Treasury Board President **Liz Sandals** said in the case of employees who retired partway through the year, they may have accrued years of vacation pay that was included on their salary disclosure.
- Brown also asked how many more members of the “millionaires club” would have been on the list if Hydro One employee salaries were still included.

Medically assisted dying

- PC Health critic **Jeff Yurek** asked whether the Health Minister’s plan to create a new patient-focused “care co-ordination service” will mean that no conscientiously objecting doctors will be forced to participate in medically assisted dying.
- Health and Long-Term Care Minister **Dr. Eric Hoskins** said patients will no longer have to rely on doctor referrals because a new telephone service will be up and running next month that will allow patients to access advice on medically assisted dying.

The PCs also asked about small businesses forced to close because of high hydro rates and about rural school closures.

NDP lead off

Executive compensation

- NDP leader **Andrea Horwath** also asked about the Sunshine List’s omission of Hydro One salaries. Horwath said the government is refusing to report the salaries even though the majority of the utility is still publicly owned.
- Horwath also called out the premier on the fact that six of the ten highest paid provincial employees were hospital CEOs. She said “health care dollars should make it to bedsides, not stop at the corner offices.”

Inclusionary zoning

- NDP MPP **Cheri DiNovo** asked whether there a “poison pill” within the province’s plans for regulating inclusionary zoning.
 - DiNovo said housing advocates are concerned the province will include a provision forcing municipalities to pay developers for each unit of affordable housing created under inclusionary zoning.
- Housing Minister **Chris Ballard** said his government is continuing to “talk to municipalities and the private sector to finalize the regulatory framework that will guide the implementation.”