

## Queen's Park Today – Daily Report October 2, 2018

Today at Queen's Park .....	1
Topics of conversation .....	4
Today's events .....	4
Question period.....	5

### Quotation of the day

“We weren't at the table, or maybe the deal would have been a little different, but it is what it is. We are calling out to the Trudeau government to compensate the agricultural industry ... and the automotive, steel and aluminum industries.”

*In question period, Premier Doug Ford says the federal government must compensate Ontario sectors affected by UMSCA — the tentative NAFTA renegotiation deal.*

---

## Today at Queen's Park

### On the schedule

The House will reconvene at 9 a.m. The government could call any one of the following pieces of business:

- The time allocation motion on **Bill 4**, Cap and Trade Cancellation Act;
- **Bill 32**, Access to Natural Gas Act;
- **Bill 34**, Green Energy Repeal Act;
- **Bill 36**, Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act;
- The government's standing orders motion; or
- The government's Financial Transparency committee motion.

The afternoon sitting will start early, beginning at 1 p.m. instead of 3 p.m. This is the second week in a row Government House Leader **Todd Smith** has put forward a motion with a last minute scheduling change, much to the chagrin of the opposition parties. The NDP and Liberals accused the government of messing with the schedule without providing proper notice to the opposition house leaders. For instance, the NDP will now have to reschedule its weekly caucus meeting, opposition house leader **Gilles Bisson** said. Smith's motion carried on division.

**Monday's debates and proceedings**

In the morning, Government House Leader **Todd Smith** received unanimous consent on a motion urging the federal government to reverse its policy that allowed the transfer of convicted child murderer **Terri-Lynne McClintic** from prison to a healing lodge. The motion passed with unanimous consent.

In the afternoon, the time allocation motion on the government's motion to strike the Select Committee on Financial Transparency passed. The Speaker could call a vote on the initial motion at any time, allowing the 9-member committee to begin meeting to investigate the spending of the former Liberal government.

The House will also have to vote on NDP MPP **Gilles Bisson's** amendment to the motion, which requests that the committee also investigate the current government. There will be six PCs and three New Democrats on the committee; its chair and vice-chair will also come from government benches.

NDP climate change critic **Peter Tabuns** re-tabled his private member's bill **Bill 37**, Liability for Climate-Related Harms Act. If passed, the bill would create a framework allowing individuals, businesses and governments to sue oil and gas corporations for "climate related damages from their products."

Greenpeace Canada urged MPPs across the aisle to support Tabuns' bill. "Any politician in Ontario who claims to stand up for the little guy should support legislation that clears a path for fossil fuel companies to pay their fair share of the costs to protect our communities from the ravages of climate change," **Keith Stewart**, senior energy strategist at Greenpeace Canada, said in a statement. Stewart was also at Tabuns' news conference promoting the bill.

Tabuns' original version of the bill cleared second reading debate earlier this year, but it died on the order paper when the spring election was called.

In the afternoon, MPPs began second reading debate on **Bill 36**, Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act.

**In the park**

Both the Organic Council of Ontario and the Lung Association are scheduled to host lobbying reception for MPPs over breakfast.

In the evening, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture will host a reception.

On Monday morning, the Toronto Overdose Prevention Society held a vigil and planted 1,265 wooden crosses on the south lawn to honour Ontarians who died from drug overdoses in 2017. The organization is urging the PC government to expand supports for opioid addiction.

Legislative Assembly security [removed the crosses](#) shortly after they were erected.

Controversial Toronto mayoral candidate and white nationalist **Faith Goldy** was spotted in the legislature's public gallery during Monday's question period. Ford spokesperson **Simon Jefferies** said Goldy was not there to meet the premier.

On Monday afternoon, advocates planned to march to Queen's Park from Toronto's Yonge and Bloor intersection to protest the PC government's cuts to a planned increase in social assistance rates. The government's move reduces an increase to Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program benefits to 1.5 per cent, from 3 per cent.

### **'It's pretty disturbing': Ontario to pressure Ottawa to compensate certain sectors impacted by new USMCA deal**

The morning after a new North American trade deal was reached, Ontario said it will press Ottawa to compensate certain sectors that were "thrown under the bus."

Premier **Doug Ford** and Trade Minister **Jim Wilson** said Monday they are optimistic about the USMCA deal, which replaces the 25-year-old NAFTA agreement. However, they are concerned about the impact opening up Canada's dairy sector to the U.S. market will have on farmers, as well as U.S. tariffs that remain on Canada's steel and aluminum exports.

"We'll make sure that we hold the federal government accountable," Ford said in question period.

The USMCA deal does not impose tariffs on Canada's auto sector, something U.S. President **Donald Trump** had threatened.

Ford and Wilson were briefed on the deal by the prime minister Monday morning.

"It's pretty disturbing that our farmers have been thrown under the bus ... without any indication of how they will be rescued or compensated," Wilson told reporters after question period.

The government will consult with impacted industries to decide next steps, he said. Federal Trade Minister **Chrystia Freeland** told reporters the federal government will compensate affected industries as they transition to a new trade regime, but did not offer details.

Wilson also said it was a "big shock" the steel and aluminum tariffs remain in place. He said he and Premier Ford were told "face-to-face" the tariffs would "go away" when they travelled to Washington last month to meet with Canadian negotiators.

But on the plus side, the pact "removes the uncertainty for many of our sectors, including the auto sector," Wilson added.

The new USMCA deal still needs to be ratified by Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. It comes after more than a year of tough negotiations.

"We're not done yet; it's not signed. So we're going to keep fighting," Wilson said.

Opposition Leader **Andrea Horwath** said she was concerned the deal would undermine certain industries and be the "slow death" of supply management system for dairy farmers.

## Topics of conversation

- Alberta cities and towns expressed solidarity with Toronto over Ontario Premier **Doug Ford**'s controversial council-cutting legislation ahead of the October 22 municipal election. The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association passed a symbolic resolution calling Ford's move a "disrespectful attack on municipal government" that could set a dangerous precedent in other provinces, [according to the CBC](#).
  - Seventy-five per cent of Alberta municipal delegates supported the resolution.
- A [fresh nationwide public-opinion poll](#) from DART Insight and Communications found Premier **Doug Ford**'s approval rating has dipped three percentage points, to 37 per cent, since its last poll just after the spring vote. DART's report chalked the dip in popularity up to Ford's controversial Toronto council-cutting decision. Compared to the popularity of Canada's other first ministers, Ford fell in the middle of the pack.

## Today's events

### **October 2 at 9:15 a.m. – Toronto**

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Food and Beverage Ontario, and Spirits Canada will hold a news conference in the Queen's Park media studio to discuss the industry's economic potential.

### **October 2 at 10 a.m. – Toronto**

The Canadian Hydrogen Fuel-Cell Electric Vehicle Coalition of automakers, including BMW, Honda, Hyundai, Kia, Mercedes-Benz and Toyota, will offer test drives of hydrogen-powered vehicles in front of the legislature's main entrance until 4 p.m.

### **October 2 at 10 a.m. – Toronto**

The Ontario Campaign for Action on Tobacco will hold a news conference in the media studio over concerns about how vaping products are displayed and promoted in Ontario.

### **October 2 at 4:30 p.m. – Toronto**

*Toronto Star* columnist **Martin Regg Cohn** and *TVO The Agenda*'s **Steve Paikin** will host a [post-election panel](#) featuring Environment Minister **Rod Phillips**, Deputy NDP leader **Sara Singh**, Liberal MPP **Michael Coteau**, and Green Party Leader **Mike Schreiner** at Ryerson University.

## Question period

### NDP lead-off

#### New NAFTA deal

- Official Opposition Leader **Andrea Horwath** began question period by discussing the impact the USMCA deal will have on certain industries. She asked what the province plans to do about opening up Canada's dairy farmers to U.S. competition, as well as the impact of lingering steel and aluminum tariffs on Ontario business.
  - Premier **Doug Ford** said this was probably the “only time we’re going to agree on something with the leader of the opposition” and proclaimed that Ontario will pressure Ottawa to compensate those industries.

#### Safe injection sites

- Horwath also accused the government of dragging its heels to make a decision on safe injection sites.
  - Health Minister **Christine Elliott** said she is still finalizing her recommendations and an announcement is coming “very soon.”
  - After question period Community and Social Services Minister **Lisa MacLeod** told reporters the health minister has indicated it “will take an extra month to get this right.”
  - Elliott asked the federal government for an extension to its September 30 exemption deadline last week, which was granted.

The NDP also asked if the government is planning to sell off Crown corporations to offset the \$15-billion deficit; whether the PCs will continue funding Ontario's first-ever legal clinic for the LGBTQ community; and about the decision to freeze the minimum wage at \$14 an hour.

### Liberal question

#### Reducing GHG emissions

- Liberal MPP **Nathalie Des Rosiers** asked why the \$1 billion in proceeds from the cap-and-trade system's carbon auction is not being used for programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as the previous government intended.

### PC friendly questions

The PCs asked themselves friendly questions about mercury contamination benefits for Grassy Narrows First Nation, which the government is indexing to inflation; the revamped NAFTA deal; the PC government's three-pronged probe into past Liberal government spending (including a commission of inquiry, EY Canada's line-by-line review, and the Select Committee on Financial Transparency); and the tune-up for the Drive Clean program that will target heavy-duty vehicles.

Environment Minister **Rod Phillips** said he spoke to the head of the Ontario Trucking Association who supports the government's plan to bring a program focusing on big emitters — heavy trucks and vehicles using diesel fuel.