



## LEGISLATIVE AGENDA DISRUPTED BY ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL PLOW MATCH

The Legislature was adjourned from its regularly scheduled Monday and Tuesday sittings by the International Plowing Match in the community of Minto. The annual expo has progressively become a much-anticipated and highly important event on the calendar. So much so, that MPPs deem it a command performance that forces the shutdown of the legislative session. At this year's event, the media reported that Premier Wynne was booed and heckled, primarily in protest of high electricity rates. MPPs resumed legislative business on Wednesday.

## NEW BILLS INTRODUCED

### **BILL 17, SAVING THE GIRL NEXT DOOR ACT, 2016**

PC MPP Laurie Scott (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock) re-introduced her bill that aims to address the growing problem of sex-trafficking in the province.

### **BILL 18, UNIVERSITÉ DE L'ONTARIO FRANÇAIS ACT, 2016**

The Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs, Francine Lalonde (Ottawa—Orleans), introduced her bill that would establish the Université de l'Ontario français. The university would offer degrees and programs in French.

### **BILL 19, SAFE TEXTING ZONES ACT, 2016**

PC MPP Vic Fedeli (Nipissing) introduced his bill which would create texting zones on highways where a driver is able to park or stop safely to use a hand-held wireless communication device.

### **BILL 20, IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SERVICES IN ONTARIO ACT, 2016**

NDP MPP Teresa Armstrong (London—Fanshawe) introduced her bill that would continue the Mental Health and Addictions

Leadership Advisory Council. The Council's mandate, set out in section 3 of the Bill, is to advise on and monitor the expeditious implementation of the recommendations made by the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly on Mental Health and Addictions in its report released in August 2010. The Council is also empowered to make recommendations to the government with respect to improving mental health and addictions services in Ontario.

### **BILL 21, MINISTRY OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT (PAROLE), 2016**

PC MPP John Yakabuski (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke) introduced a bill that would put greater restrictions on parolees.

### **BILL 22, TICKET SPECULATION AMENDMENT ACT (PURCHASE AND SALE REQUIREMENTS), 2016**

Liberal MPP Sophie Kiwala (Kingston and the Islands) introduced a bill that would require ticket scalpers to list the original purchase price of a ticket when it is offered for sale in a print or electronic format.

## MOTIONS DEBATED

### THRONE SPEECH

A motion of confidence in the Liberals' Throne Speech passed by a vote of 52–39 with the opposition parties voting against the government.

### SUSPENSION OF DRIVERS' LICENSES

PC MP Jim McDonnell (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry) brought forth a motion calling on the government to implement a five-day service guarantee for re-instituting drivers' licences suspended for medical reasons. McDonnell's motion carried by a voice vote.

## AROUND THE LEGISLATURE

### WYNNE RELEASES NEW MANDATE LETTERS FOR MINISTERS

Midway through her electoral term, Premier Kathleen Wynne released [updated mandate letters](#) to her Cabinet Ministers.

Wynne's [mandate letter to her new Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter](#), outlined a number of areas of concentration including creating more accessible, affordable, high-quality early years and child care programs for families Wynne also wants to Hunter to continue to implement the renewed vision for education which includes achieving excellence, ensuring equity, promoting well-being and enhancing public confidence. Finally, Wynne wants Hunter to build Ontario's skilled workforce for the modern economy.

Wynne's [mandate letter to Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development, Deb Matthews](#), emphasized three main areas including creating a more seamless, integrated client focused employment and training system to improve the experience for workers and job seekers and to help Ontarians prepare for the jobs of the future. As well, Wynne wants to see an increased access to high-quality and affordable college and university education. Lastly, Wynne wants to continue building Ontario's highly skilled workforce for the modern economy.

## IN OTHER NEWS

### WYNNE LOOKS AHEAD TO 2018

While Premier Kathleen Wynne [announced a major re-organization](#) of her Liberal Party's operations, including a shakeup in the Premier's office, in anticipation of the 2018 general election, a poll was released by [Mainstreet Research/Postmedia poll](#) that found the Liberals could win a majority government in 2018. The only problem for Wynne in the poll was that it said that only a new Liberal Party Leader could achieve that task. The poll found that the Liberals would best the PCs by 4 per cent and would sweep the City of Toronto by 22 per cent.

This poll continues the current narrative that Wynne's 2014 general election popularity with Ontarians has waned. And, with the recent by-election loss in the longtime Liberal stronghold of Scarborough—Rouge River, all eyes will now be fixed on the next by-election in Ottawa—Vanier. It is likely as the momentum builds for the Ottawa—Vanier by-election, the media attention will make it appear as a referendum on Wynne's leadership. Were Wynne to lose that by-election, her continued leadership would be seriously imperiled.

## **FORMER OMBUDSMAN TO BE PC CANDIDATE IN OTTAWA-VANIER BY-ELECTION**

Former Ontario Ombudsman, Andre Morin, has been confirmed as the Progressive Conservative candidate for the upcoming Ottawa—Vanier by-election. The seat became vacant with the resignation of former Liberal Attorney-General Madeleine Meilleur. Wynne must call the by-election by the end of 2016.

While some may see Morin's candidacy as a vengeful act against the Liberals for denying him a third five-year term as Ombudsman, his candidacy reinforces the argument that Patrick Brown is able to attract high-profile candidates to run for his party. Coupled with the recent by-election victory by another high-profile candidate, former local city councilor Raymond Cho in Scarborough Rouge River, Morin's candidacy may create momentum for Brown that other high-profile individuals may find irresistible in leading up to the 2018 general election. More so if Morin is able to end the Liberals' 45-year dynasty in this riding.

## **SEX-ED CURRICULUM CONTROVERSY CONTINUES FOR PATRICK BROWN**

Despite his repeated attempts to move forward on the sex-ed curriculum file, PC Leader Patrick Brown's former supporters in the social conservative movement are determined to seek their pound of flesh. This week, social conservatives [released emails and statements](#) attributed to Brown pronouncing his determination to scrap the new sex-ed curriculum. While social conservatives continue to rail against the trustworthiness of Brown, most other Ontarians may eventually conclude that Brown has made a sincere transformation in his political views on social and equity issues. If they do, this issue may, in the end, help Brown establish a more modern PC party. However, if Ontarians see this episode as evidence that Brown will say anything to win, the Liberals and NDP may have a chance to brand him as untrustworthy and unfit to be Premier.