

BILL 37, PROTECTING STUDENTS ACT, COMPLETES COMMITTEE REVIEW AND IS RETURNED TO LEGISLATURE FOR 3RD READING

The Standing Committee on Economic and Finance Affairs completed its clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 37, *Protecting Students Act* last Thursday and has sent the bill back to the Legislative Assembly for 3rd Reading. In its deliberations, the committee reviewed 53 amendments. Unfortunately, at time of this report's publication, the committee has not posted the successful amendments on the Legislature's official record—Hansard.

In the meantime, OSSTF/FEESO President Paul Elliott's [presentation](#) to the committee concentrated on some of OSSTF/FEESO's concerns with the proposed legislation including one regarding the publication of members' involvement in criminal proceedings. Elliott said, "That's one of the issues that we're talking about here: criminal proceedings that are also posted on anything which has yet to be proven. One of the things we find with this is that the prejudicial effect these postings have for innocent members is wide-ranging and is felt for years."

Another issue that Elliott spoke to was non-relevant criminal convictions. Elliott remarked, "We speak to some of those other ones—that these can needlessly harm excellent and long-serving teachers. These are convictions that can go back a number of years, that can go back to pot possession—historic convictions when members were teenagers or very young adults. These may have a discriminatory nature, especially when we get into the Human Rights Code."

Finally, Elliott's final concern centered on the definition of a suspension. He said, "This requires employers to report a member's conduct to the college when a member is terminated or when it imposes restrictions on the members. One of the things that we have listed there and is in the LeSage report—one of the things he makes very clear in it—is that the college must better define "restrictions on the member's duties" because it is far too broad, as it states."

Other presenters included the Ontario College of Teachers, College of Early Childhood Educators, the Ontario Principals' Council and the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario.

NEW BILLS INTRODUCED

BILL 56, HINDU HERITAGE MONTH ACT

Liberal MPP Joe Dickson (Ajax—Pickering) withdrew his Bill 52, *Hindu Heritage Month Act*, which would have proclaimed October as *Hindu Heritage Month Act*, and re-introduced it as Bill 56, *Hindu Heritage Month Act*, which would now proclaim November as Hindu Heritage Month.

BILL 57, KATELYNN'S PRINCIPLE ACT (DECISIONS AFFECTING CHILDREN)

NDP MPP Monique Taylor (Hamilton Mountain) introduced Bill 57, *Katelynn's Principle Act (Decisions Affecting Children)*. Taylor's proposed legislation would mandate that children be heard and involved in the decision-making process regarding issues of their well-being.

BILL 58, DELEGATED ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITIES ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

PC MPP Jim McDonell (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry) introduced Bill 58, *Delegated*

Administrative Authorities Accountability and Transparency Act. McDonell's bill would require the Auditor General to do an annual audit of the accounts and financial transactions of each administrative authority such as the one that oversees the *Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act*. McDonell wants to also make those administrative authorities subject to the Sunshine List that includes all public sector workers who make \$100,000 or more annually.

BILL 59, PUTTING CONSUMERS FIRST ACT (CONSUMER PROTECTION STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT)

Liberal MPP and Government and Consumer Services Minister Marie-France Lalonde (Ottawa—Orleans) introduced Bill 59, *Putting Consumers First Act (Consumer Protection Statute Law Amendment)*. Lalonde's bill seeks to increase regulations on door-to-door sales, regulate home inspections and introduce new rules for the payday loan industry.

BILLS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

BILL 7, PROMOTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACT, 2016

Minister of Housing, Chris Ballard's (Newmarket—Aurora) bill to make more affordable housing available in Ontario calls for inclusionary zoning so that more affordable units can be built. The bill passed 2nd Reading with all-party support and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

BILL 56, HINDU HERITAGE MONTH ACT

As quickly as it was introduced, Liberal MPP Joe Dickson's (Ajax—Pickering) Bill 56, *Hindu Heritage Month Act*, which would now proclaim November as Hindu Heritage Month, was also given 2nd Reading and was referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

BILL 30, HUMAN RIGHTS CODE AMENDMENT ACT (GENETIC CHARACTERISTICS)

PC MPP Sylvia Jones' (Dufferin—Caledon) and Liberal MPP Mike Colle's (Eglinton—Lawrence) bill would amend the Human Rights Code to include genetic characteristics as a prohibited ground of discrimination. The bill passed 2nd Reading and was referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

BILL 34, CHILDREN'S LAW REFORM AMENDMENT ACT (RELATIONSHIP WITH GRANDPARENTS)

NDP MPP Michael Mantha's (Algoma—Manitoulin) Bill 34, *Children's Law Reform Amendment Act (Relationship with Grandparents)* makes one addition and one amendment to the *Children's Law Reform Act*. The addition prohibits a person entitled to custody of a child from creating or maintaining unreasonable barriers to the formation and continuation of personal relationships between the child and the child's grandparents. The amendment would set out the needs and circumstances of a child that the court must consider in determining the best interests of the child. The bill adds to that list the emotional ties between the child and the child's grandparents and the willingness of each person applying for custody of the child to facilitate contact with the child's grandparents, if such contact would be appropriate in the circumstances. The bill passed 2nd Reading and was referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

BILLS PASSED

BILL 55, REMEMBRANCE WEEK ACT

Bill 55, *Remembrance Week Act*, co-sponsored by PC MPP Jim Wilson (Simcoe—Grey), NDP MPP Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale—High Park) and Liberal MPP John Fraser (Ottawa South) was fast-tracked through the Legislature in time for this year's commemoration. The bill would proclaim the week preceding Remembrance Day in each year as Remembrance Week.

IN OTHER NEWS

TWO LIBERALS CHARGED WITH ELECTIONS ACT VIOLATIONS

Almost two years after the Sudbury by-election that saw former Federal NDP MP Glenn Thibeault win a seat in the Ontario Legislature as a Liberal, Ontario Provincial Police laid *Elections Act* charges against two prominent Ontario Liberals. Former Deputy Chief of Staff to the Premier and current Chief Executive Officer of the Ontario Liberal Party, Pat Sorbara, faces two charges relating to bribery in the attempt to have former 2014 Liberal candidate, Andrew Olivier, withdraw from seeking the Liberal nomination for the by-election. Also charged is local Sudbury Liberal fundraiser Gerry Lougheed. They are both set to appear in court on November 21.

The stunning charges against Sorbara and Lougheed left Premier Kathleen Wynne and her caucus reeling from Opposition attacks in the Question Period. The Opposition seized on the charges to expand their narrative that the Liberals are a tired, corrupt administration that needs to be replaced at the next election. As well, the Opposition is seeking the resignation from Cabinet by Thibeault, who was recently appointed as Minister of Energy. The Opposition alleges that Thibeault was promised a Cabinet position in order to leave federal politics and run for the provincial Liberals.

With two by-elections slated for November 17, these charges put more pressure on Wynne to win at least the Ottawa—Vanier contest. The historically Liberal riding is facing a serious challenge from newly-minted Progressive Conservative candidate and former Ontario Ombudsman, André Marin. If the Liberals were to lose in Ottawa—Vanier, their annual general meeting, slated to start the next day in Ottawa will surely take on the atmosphere of a wake. And, with the current high disapproval ratings of Wynne in polls, the pressure on the Premier to right the Liberal ship will intensify.

ONTARIO OMBUDSMAN RELEASES ANNUAL REPORT

In his [first annual report](#), Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé said that he took in 22,118 cases in the 2015–16 fiscal year. Dubé said that the Family Responsibility Office (FRO) led all government organizations with 1,025 complaints. The FRO is in charge of enforcing child and spousal support payments.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE SAYS LIBERALS WILL NOT BALANCE BUDGET BY 2016–17

Ontario's Financial Accountability officer, David Wake, released his office's updated [Economic and Fiscal Outlook](#). Wake says that, despite the Liberal government's assertions, the province will not achieve its goal of eliminating the deficit by 2016–17. Wake says that the reason is because of the change to the Auditor General's accounting treatment for pension plans that is predicted to increase the deficit by \$1.5 billion. Wake predicts that the deficit will continue well into the future with projected deficits of \$5.2 billion in 2016–17 and \$2.6 billion in 2017–18. According to the report, the only way to achieve a balanced budget would be for the government to sell public assets or raise revenues.

PROVINCE TO HOLD PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS ON BASIC INCOME

Former Conservative Senator Hugh Segal released his [discussion paper](#) to the Liberal government on a pilot project on creating a Basic Income for all Ontarians. With Segal's report complete, [public consultations](#) will now begin throughout the province for the next two months ending on January 31, 2017. Afterwards, the Liberals hope to start a pilot project by April 2017.

**The Legislature will be adjourned during the week of November 7, 2016.
It will resume on Monday, November 14, 2016.**