

NEW BILLS INTRODUCED

BILL 131, CHILDHOOD APRAXIA OF SPEECH AWARENESS DAY ACT

The bill proclaims May 14 in each year as Childhood Apraxia of Speech Awareness Day.

BILL 132, FAIR HYDRO ACT

The Liberals introduced their bill that will ultimately reduce hydro-electric rates by a total of 25 per cent. Soon after the bill was introduced, media reports indicated that hydro rates would dramatically increase by 2022 and continue their upward trajectory.

BILLS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

BILL 124, RENTAL FAIRNESS ACT

Housing Minister Chris Ballard's (Newmarket—Aurora) Bill 124, *Rental Fairness Act*, was voted on at 2nd Reading. It passed unanimously and was referred to the Standing Committee on General Government. The committee has been ordered to consider the bill and report back to the House by May 17. Ballard's bill would expand rent control to include buildings built after 1991 and limitations on above-guideline rent increases.

BILL 116, LIQUOR STATUTE AMENDMENT ACT (SALE OF SPIRITS MANUFACTURED FOR BRAND OWNERS)

NDP MPP Percy Hatfield's bill passed 2nd Reading and was referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

BILL 123, KOREAN HERITAGE MONTH ACT

PC MPP Raymond Cho's (Scarborough—Rouge River) bill passed and was referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills. Cho's bill would proclaim the month of October in each year as Korean Heritage Month.

MOTIONS

PHARMACARE

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath used her party's formal opposition day to present a [motion](#) calling on the Ontario Legislature to pressure the Liberal government to:

“Express its support for universal Ontario pharmacare, which will cover essential medicines for all Ontarians without charging premiums or deductibles, and, based on evidence supported by numerous international studies, help save lives and improve Ontarians’ health.”

Horwath wants the Liberals to expand the latter's proposed free prescription medicines for those 24 years of age and under to all Ontarians. Horwath has made universal pharmacare a central element of her party's upcoming election platform. The motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

NORTHERN ONTARIO

NDP MPP John Vanthof proposed a [motion](#) calling on the Legislative Assembly to create a standing committee of Northern Ontario MPPs from all political parties that would provide a review of bills impacting Northern Ontario. The non-binding motion carried.

EDUCATION NEWS

Education Minister Mitzie Hunter announced that Ontario's high school graduation rate has reached an all-time high. In 2016, the five-year graduation rate was 86.5 per cent, which is up from 68 per cent in 2004. The four-year graduation rate is now 79.6 per cent, up from 56.6 per cent in 2004.

IN OTHER NEWS

LIBERALS HYDRO SALE COMPLETE

The Liberal government [announced](#) it has sold the final portion of its planned Hydro One shares to private interests. The Liberals say that they have raised over \$9 billion in the sale to finance infrastructure programs.

BROWN ETHICS MOTION

Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown put forward a [motion](#) on his proposed *Ontario Ethics and Accountability Plan*. Brown says his bill would ban Cabinet Ministers from fundraising from their own stakeholders, expand the one-year lobbying cooling-off period for ministerial staff, restore the Auditor General's full oversight of government advertising and require Cabinet Ministers named in a police investigation to temporarily step aside until they are cleared of any wrongdoing. Brown's motion was supported by the NDP but opposed by the Liberals. The motion was defeated by a vote of 49-31.

PC'S WITHDRAW ANTI-UNION BILL ON CARD CERTIFICATION

With the Sault Ste. Marie byelection on Thursday, June 1, PC MPP [Jim McDonnell](#) *withdrew* his anti-union [Bill 83, Fairness in Labour Relations \(Bargaining Units and Certification of Trade Unions\)](#) on card certification. The bill's withdrawal is a clear attempt by PC Leader, Patrick Brown, to re-brand his party as supportive of union rights. Unfortunately, for Brown, the bill was introduced last December 6, 2016, well into his time as the party's leader.