

# Queen's Park notes FOLLOW US @Mobilepk

For the week of September 28–October 2, 2020

## NEW BILLS INTRODUCED

### **BILL 208, SCOTTISH HERITAGE DAY ACT**

PC MPP Jim McDonell's (Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry) bill would proclaim November 30 in each year as Scottish Heritage Day. McDonell's bill also passed 2nd Reading and was referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

### **BILL 209, SUPPORTING ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND RENEWAL IN THE NIAGARA REGION ACT**

NDP MPP Wayne Gates' (Niagara Falls) private member's bill would eliminate the 6.1 per cent basic tax from VQA wines and Ontario wines produced entirely from grapes grown in the province of Ontario and that are sold at winery retail stores only located at the winery.

## BILLS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

### **BILL 208, SCOTTISH HERITAGE DAY ACT**

See above in "New Bills Introduced."

## BILLS PASSED

### **BILL 180, SOMALI HERITAGE WEEK ACT**

NDP MPP Faisal Hassan's (York South—Weston) bill would proclaim the week of June 25 through July 1 in each year as Somali Heritage Week.

### **BILL 204, HELPING TENANTS AND SMALL BUSINESSES ACT, 2020**

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Steve Clark's (Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes), bill passed and is now law. The bill would extend the freeze on residential rents until the end of 2021.

## IN OTHER NEWS

### PC MPP CALLS FOR RECOGNITION OF PARENTS' ROLES AS PRIMARY EDUCATORS' OF THEIR CHILDREN

PC MPP Daisy Wai (Richmond Hill) put forth a motion calling on the government to recognize parents' roles as primary educators of their children. Her [motion states](#):

"I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should recognize the importance of respecting parents' roles and rights as their children's primary educators; support parental engagement in our quality education system; work to ensure Ontario's education system communicates with parents and guardians; and provides them with ample opportunity for active involvement, knowledge and decision-making in their children's education."

In her speech, Wai recounts her experiences with her children navigating the education system. She urges parents to have more communication with their children's educators. As well, Wai praised the PC government's elimination of discovery math. Unfortunately, Wai offered no benchmarks in how to accomplish her goal in her motion or speech.

### FORD MEETS OPPOSITION LEADERS

Responding to a request by NDP leader Andrea Horwath (Hamilton Centre), Premier Ford (Etobicoke North) invited the three opposition leaders to a meeting to discuss the government's COVID-19 response. Unfortunately, Horwath was unable to attend citing a pre-arranged medical appointment. NDP co-deputy leader John Vanthof (Timiskaming—Cochrane) attended on her behalf. Green Party leader Mike Schreiner (Guelph) and Liberal leader Steven Del Duca were present for the meeting. After the meeting, Ford expressed thanks to the other leaders for their questions and input. At this point, no future meetings are scheduled.

### ELECTION SPECULATION

With Premier Doug Ford (Etobicoke North) reversing his approval ratings to a much more positive standing, many PC backroom operatives are urging him to call an early election to seize on his newfound popularity. These backroom operatives have seen how the New Brunswick Conservative Party successfully called and increased its seat count to form a majority government. At the same time, they are also witnessing the same action by the NDP minority government in British Columbia seeking to morph its minority government into a majority government. At this point, polls show that the BC NDP has a very strong chance to increase its seat count and become a majority government. Despite this, Ford insists that he will serve the full four-year term and hold elections at the mandated date of June 2, 2022. In the meantime, The Ontario PC party has started to nominate its 72 incumbent MPPs and plans to nominate candidates in the other 52 non-PC ridings by March, 2021. Fearing an early election call, the Ontario Liberal Party has put forth a motion in the Ontario Legislature to commit the Ford government to holding the election in June 2022. While the Liberals, and others, may fear an early election call, Ford may be thinking about the last Ontario Premier who held an early election—David Peterson. Peterson went from a majority government to a crushing defeat where he even lost his own seat in 1990. Coupled with voters being focused on COVID-19, Ford may be more cautious than his backroom operatives on calling an early election.