

PATRICK BROWN TAKES HIS SEAT

With the Legislature returning from its summer recess, newly-elected MPP and Progressive Conservative Leader Patrick Brown (Simcoe North) began his new role by promising to set a different tone in the Legislature. But, once Question Period began, he lost no time in accusing Premier Kathleen Wynne (Don Valley West) of presiding over a “fire sale” of Hydro One and abandoning the negotiations table with the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario. Meanwhile, New Democratic Party Leader Andrea Horwath (Hamilton Centre) made no such promises and continued her questioning of the Liberal’s proposed sale of 60 per cent of Hydro One. She also promised to continue making health care and education priorities for her party in this session.

LIBERALS BEGIN PROCESS OF SELLING HYDRO ONE

Kathleen Wynne’s government began [the formal process](#) of selling 60 per cent of Hydro One with the unveiling of the preliminary prospectus to the Ontario Securities Commission. The Liberals want to sell Hydro One to fund infrastructure projects. While Premier Wynne continues to claim that with the Ontario government maintaining 40 per cent ownership and that no buyer can own more than 10 per cent of Hydro One, concerns are still being expressed by both opposition parties. The [NDP says](#), “Our shared public assets provide more affordable hydro, develop environmentally-friendly energy, create thousands of good Ontario jobs, and are accountable to all Ontarians.” NDP Leader Andrea Horwath has made Hydro One’s sale her main priority in the Legislature following her summer’s province-wide tour gauging public opposition to the sale. The [Conservatives also oppose the sale](#) of Hydro One citing three reasons including a secret process lacking in public consultation, the loss of majority ownership and loss of independent consumer protection. With the sale of Hydro One now imminent, the political firestorm will only intensify over the next few weeks.

NDP WANTS INFORMATION FOR PROVINCIAL ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

NDP MPP Monique Taylor (Hamilton Mountain) introduced [Bill 117, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Amendment Act](#). Taylor’s bill would require agencies and service providers to inform the *Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth* if a child dies within 12 months of working with them. In addressing the need for the bill, Taylor said, “If a child dies or is critically injured while in care, it is imperative for the advocate to be notified promptly and given the same information as the government so that the advocate may independently determine how best to protect the rights of the province’s kids in care so that injuries or death may never happen again.”

By the end of the sessional week, Taylor’s bill had passed second reading and was referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy for review.

LIBERALS ANNOUNCE ANNUAL FUNDING FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRES

Premier Kathleen Wynne [announced](#) \$1.75 million in annual funding for the 42 sexual assault centres across Ontario. Wynne said the funding will deliver on the commitments made in *It's Never Okay*, the government's plan to stop sexual violence and harassment. She said that funding will help improve the service sexual assault centres provide to survivors of sexual violence. During the announcement, Wynne was asked if she had ever been a victim of sexual assault. In response, Wynne emotionally [recounted an instance where she could have been a victim of sexual assault](#).

STUDENT TRANSITION FUNDING

Education Minister Liz Sandals (Guelph) and Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities Reza Moridi (Richmond Hill) [announced](#) a pilot program designed to help students transition between secondary and post-secondary education. The two-year, \$20-million pilot program, *Experience Ontario*, will give approximately 600 students across the province work experience, career coaching and mentorship in its first year. The program will provide high school students with career coaching to help them choose the appropriate postsecondary educational path or career path for them.