

ONTARIO MEDICAL ASSOCIATION DECRIES LIBERAL CUTS TO HEALTHCARE

Ontario's doctors are furious at the Wynne government for a 1.3 per cent cut in their fees. [The Ontario Medical Association says](#) the total cuts to patient services amount to 6.9 per cent. NDP Health Critic France Gelinias (Nickle Belt) accused the Liberals of putting the health system in peril by disrespecting doctors. She [said](#), "The actions of this Liberal government are damaging our health care system. They are creating barriers to care for people who need it the most. The government can see the damage they're doing to our system, yet they continue plowing right ahead. The government needs to recognize that physicians need to be compensated for the work they do, the care they provide, by working out a deal that doesn't cause further damage to our health care system. My question is very simple: Why won't this government treat physicians with respect and negotiate?"

In response, Liberal Deputy Premier (and former Health Minister) Deb Matthews (London North Centre) [replied](#), "I've heard the member opposite stand up and fight for better home care, for nurse practitioners, for midwives, for PSWs, and today she's standing up and arguing that we should increase compensation for a group of people who do fantastic work but who are already the highest-paid in the country and, arguably, the world. CIHI has recently come out with a report that shows that Ontario doctors are paid the highest in the country, earning \$368,000 a year on average. There are many demands on our health care system. I will be the first to admit that. But the compensation to our physicians is not in the top 10."

SUDBURY BY-ELECTION FALLOUT CONTINUES

The opposition parties continued to use Question Period to focus on what the Premier and her staff did in relation to the nomination of a Liberal candidate in this year's Sudbury by-election. With last week's announcement that the Ontario Provincial Police had charged local Liberal volunteer, Gerry Lougheed, with two criminal offences, the opposition wanted to know who directed him to make an offer to Andrew Olivier to withdraw from the Liberal nomination contest. Both PC Leader, Patrick Brown (Simcoe North) and NDP Leader, Andrea Horwath (Hamilton Centre) led with question on this matter. In making her case, Horwath [said](#), "The responsibility for the Sudbury bribery scandal falls squarely on the shoulders of the Premier of this province. The recording of the conversation of Mr. Lougheed and the Premier's deputy chief of staff shows that everything was being done at the bidding of the Premier of this province. The people of Sudbury know that Mr. Lougheed is just a good Liberal soldier who does what he's told by the Premier or Mr. Trudeau."

While following the same line of questioning as Horwath, Brown asked if the Premier would testify in court if called. He [said](#), "We know the Premier has the parliamentary privilege to be exempted as a witness. However, the privilege is not meant to impede the course of justice. The people of Ontario deserve to know what really happened with the Sudbury by-election scandal, so I'm sure the people of Ontario want the Premier to waive that privilege and appear if called to the trial."

Meanwhile, the Liberals are clearly attempting to distance themselves from Lougheed, stating that Lougheed also made political donations to the NDP Liberal House Leader, Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre) [said](#), “I’m sure the NDP sent thank-you letters to Mr. Lougheed when he gave \$500 in the 2014 election to the former MPP Joe Cimino. I’m sure the member from Nickel Belt also sent him a thank-you letter when he donated to her campaign another \$500 in the same campaign in 2014—not to mention that I’m sure the Ontario NDP sent him thank-you letters and continued to invite him to events when, in 2008, he gave them about \$600, and the list goes on and on.”

Despite the attempts to push this issue away, the Liberals can expect more opposition questioning this week. And, with CTV’s W5 program announcing that it will broadcast a Kathleen Wynne documentary on Saturday, October 10, which was filmed during the Sudbury by-election, the heat on Wynne may increase greatly.

HYDRO ONE SALE GREETED BY MORE OPPOSITION

The Liberal’s plan to sell 60 per cent of Hydro One to private interests was greeted with more organized opposition. The group Keep Hydro Public [released](#) a list of 165 communities whose councils have passed motions against the plan. Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley, said the government needs to listen to mayors and councils across the province, because they are the true owners of Hydro One, not the Ontario government.

In support, NDP Leader, Andrea Horwath, citing Bradley, [said](#), “Yesterday, we heard that 165 municipalities so far oppose the Liberal sell-off of Hydro One. One of their biggest complaints is the utter lack of any consultation whatsoever by this arrogant Premier. Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley said that you would have to actually be Sherlock Holmes to figure out that the Liberal pre-election budget was talking about selling off Ontario’s hydro utility. The Premier needs to listen. If she won’t listen to me, then she should be listening to the municipal leaders and the people of this province, who are telling her that they haven’t had a say and that they want a say. Will this Premier allow public hearings, either through the OEB or through any other mechanism, on the sell-off of Hydro One?” In response, Wynne claimed that, in a recent Sarnia-area event, Bradley had not raised the issue. Wynne [said](#), “I think it was one of the first times in recent memory that a Premier had actually been to speak with the businesses in Sarnia. It was a great meeting. I had an opportunity to have a tour. But, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that the number one issue that the mayor of Sarnia raised with me was the building of a road. The mayor of Sarnia wants money for infrastructure. The mayor of Sarnia knows that his and his community’s productivity and competitiveness rest on having investments in infrastructure.”

BILL 9, ENDING COAL FOR CLEANER AIR ACT MOVES TO COMMITTEE

[Bill 9, Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act](#), passed 2nd Reading with unanimous support from all parties and was referred to Standing Committee on General Government. The bill would prohibit future governments from opening any new coal plants in the province.

NEW ADOPTION PROCEDURES

The Minister of Children and Youth Services, Tracy MacCharles (Pickering—Scarborough East) [says](#) adoption will be made easier for children in the care of children's aid societies. The province will be funding an additional 15 more targeted adoption recruiters. The province is also requiring children's aid societies to expand their use of the [AdoptOntario](#) website so more children can be matched with waiting families. The province also announced it is extending funding to caregivers of youth who need a stable home from age 18 to 21 so that they may complete high school.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH EXTENDS IN VITRO FERTILIZATION FUNDING

The Minister of Health and Long-term Care, Eric Hoskins (St. Paul's) [announced](#) in vitro fertilization (IVF) service funding for an additional 4,000 Ontarians. As of December 2015, the province will fund one IVF cycle per eligible patient per lifetime for women up to age 42. The funding will be available for all eligible patients, regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation or marital status. Through this program, funding for fertility treatments will increase by \$50 million per year. Today, the government spends \$20 million per year to fund IVF procedures for women with blocked fallopian tubes.

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA DESIGNATED AS FRENCH-LANGUAGE PROVIDER

On Franco-Ontarian Day, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities [granted](#) the University of Ottawa partial designation as a French-language service provider under the [French Language Services Act](#). The designation will come into effect on January 1, 2016. As of that date, the university will be legally required to serve its 11,500 francophone students in their own language.