



FOCUS ON QUEEN'S PARK



Status of Bills in the House

Bill 24, Finance Statute Amendment Act

Bill 158, Accounting Act

Bill 168, Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act, (Violence and Harassment in the Workplace), 2009

Bill 172, Ticket Speculation Amendment Act, 2009

Bill 173, Mining Amendment Act, 2009

Bill 175, Ontario Labour Mobility Act

Bill 177, Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act, 2009

Bill 179, Regulated Health Professions Statute Law Amendment Act, 2009

Bill 183, Ontario College of Trades & Apprenticeship Act, 2009

Bill 185, Environmental Protection Amendment Act (Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading), 2009

Bill 187, Technical Standards and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2009

Bill 191, Far North Act, 2009

Bill 169, Barrie-Innisfil Boundary Adjustment Act, 2009

The full text of all Bills can be found at www.ontla.on.ca under the section Bills and Lawmaking, Current Session.

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Legislature Resumes Sitting

The Ontario Legislature resumed sitting on Monday, September 14 amid scandals surrounding bulging expense claims at Ontario's eHealth agency and flagrant financial abuses at the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation.

Horwath to Focus on Recession

New Democrats will focus attention on Ontarians who have been most affected by the continuing recession during the Legislative Assembly's Fall session, says NDP Leader Andrea Horwath.

"Our focus will be on providing solutions for these Ontarians who have been largely ignored by an increasingly arrogant and distant McGuinty government," said Horwath.

"We'll be working each and every day on behalf of Ontarians who worry about pocketbook issues: jobs that are disappearing, pensions that are shrinking and a cost of living that's going up.

These are the same Ontarians who will be whacked hard by Dalton McGuinty's ill-conceived Harmonized Sales Tax grab.

There are practical solutions to the problems facing Ontarians - but the McGuinty government isn't offering them. Instead, they're proposing an unfair tax grab that leaves people paying more and will slow job growth."

Horwath and her caucus colleagues will continue to shine a light on the growing expense scandals at various government agencies, including eHealth Ontario and the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation.

"Under Dalton McGuinty's watch, we keep seeing scarce public resources wasted on perks for well-connected insiders while local hospitals close and special education programs are cut. We'll be demanding a full accounting of these misspent dollars - dollars that should have gone into public services that people rely on,

especially during these difficult economic times,” said Horwath.

The coming session will be Horwath’s second as leader. During the Spring, she earned widespread praise for her tenacious and tireless performance.

Horwath Wants Brakes Applied to Emergency Room Closure

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath has called for a moratorium on the planned closure of the emergency department at Douglas Memorial Hospital in Fort Erie.

During Question Period, backed by visiting concerned residents from Port Colborne and Fort Erie, Horwath demanded that the McGuinty government place a freeze on all cuts to Ontario’s rural, small, and northern hospitals until hard evidence can show the changes are safe and warranted.

“The McGuinty government ought to be waiting for the completion of a report from its Rural and Northern Health Panel. In the absence of proof that any of these changes will improve hospital services, the Health Minister should step in to stop the closure of this emergency

department and any other,” said Horwath.

Horwath, who represents the riding of Hamilton Centre, and Niagara Centre MPP Peter Kormos, have been vociferous critics of the Hamilton Niagara-Haldimand-Brant Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) due to its lack of community consultation and increasing dysfunction. Ontario Ombudsman André Marin is currently investigating at Horwath’s request.

A concerted community campaign headed by The Yellow Shirt Brigade has been mobilized to prevent the Fort Erie ER closure. Group members worry about the long distance to the next nearest emergency departments in Welland and Niagara Falls, nurses’ warnings of “life threatening” outcomes, the departure of four ER doctors in the past month, a “code gridlock” designation in place for ambulances and the loss of the most critical aspects of health care in life and death trauma situations.

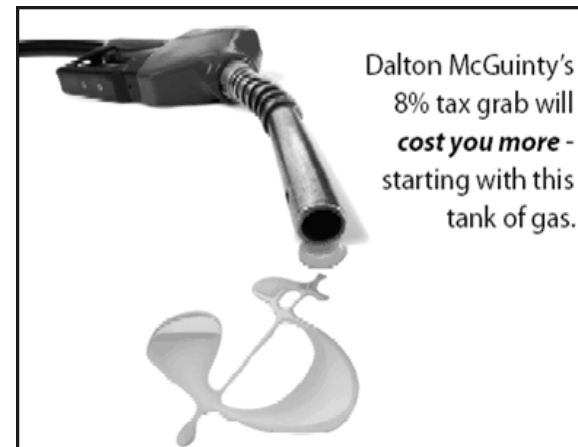
“Communities are under siege and the McGuinty government appears not to care enough to do something about it,” Horwath said. “Ontario’s small, rural, and northern hospitals deserve a real plan of support that recognizes the unique challenges and needs of the communities they serve. The McGuinty

government cannot simply hide behind the Local Health Integration Networks.”

Horwath Stands with Rural and Northwest Families

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath joined thousands at the International Plowing Match near Earlton on September 22, and called for better solutions to help rural and northern families in these tough economic times.

“We should all be proud of the values on display at this great event: honesty, hard work and lending your neighbour a hand,” said Horwath. “These values helped shape this province and we need them more than ever today.



“Ontario’s government should be embracing solutions that help rural and

northern families with the challenges we all face,” said Horwath. “Buy local’ provisions create business for our farm families. A forest sector strategy would protect northern jobs.

“Unfortunately, the McGuinty Government’s priority is an unfair tax grab that leaves families paying more while putting up to 40,000 potential jobs at risk.”

Horwath noted rural families will be hit hard by the HST with a new tax on gasoline, home heating, and the morning coffee every day. She also noted a study by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce that says the HST will stifle employment growth by as much as 40,000 potential new jobs.

“We need to get our economy back on track with smart economic policies, not an unfair tax grab,” said Horwath. “The HST is the wrong tax at the wrong time. That’s why I’ve been asking all Ontarians to join my campaign against this tax.”

In a few short months, over 70,000 people have signed the NDP’s petition to stop the McGuinty’s unfair tax grab on everyday essentials. To find out more visit www.unfairtaxgrab.com.

