

# Queen's Park notes FOLLOW US @Mobilepk

For the week of November 30–December 4, 2020

## NEW BILLS INTRODUCED

### **BILL 237, FOSTERING PRIVACY FAIRNESS ACT**

PC MPP Bob Bailey (Sarnia—Lambton) introduced his private member's bill that seeks more privacy for former foster children. Once a former foster child reached the age of 21, their name would be removed from the child welfare database. Disclosure could only be granted by the individual or courts in the future.

## BILLS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

### **BILL 230, FRONT-LINE AND ESSENTIAL SERVICE WORKER WEEK ACT**

PC MPP Kaleed Rasheed's (Mississauga East—Cooksville) private member's bill passed 2nd Reading and was referred to the Standing Committee on General Government. The bill would proclaim the third full week of March in each year as Front-line and Essential Service Worker Week.

## BILLS PASSED

### **BILL 3, COMPASSIONATE CARE ACT**

PC MPP Sam Oosterhoff's (Niagara West) private member's bill passed 3rd Reading and was granted Royal Assent. The bill would develop a framework to ensure that every Ontarian has access to quality palliative care. As well, it would require the Minister of Health to develop a provincial framework designed to support improved access to palliative care. The Minister must table a report setting out the provincial framework in the Legislative Assembly within one year after the Bill comes into force. Within three years after the report is tabled, the Minister must prepare and table a report on the state of palliative care in Ontario. Each report must be published on a Government of Ontario website.

### **BILL 61, EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK ACT**

NDP MPP Jill Andrew's (Toronto—St. Paul's) private member's bill passed 3rd Reading and awaits Royal Assent. Andrew's bill would proclaim the week beginning February 1 in each year as Eating Disorders Awareness Week.

### **BILL 118, OCCUPIERS' LIABILITY AMENDMENT ACT**

PC MPP Norm Miller's (Parry Sound—Muskoka) private member's bill passed 3rd Reading and awaits Royal Assent. The bill would amend the *Occupiers' Liability Act* to provide that no action shall be brought for the recovery of damages for personal injury caused by snow or ice against an occupier or an independent contractor employed by the occupier to remove snow or ice, unless, within 60 days after the occurrence of the injury, written notice of the claim is served. The Bill also sets out exceptions to this rule.

### **BILL 222, ONTARIO REBUILDING AND RECOVERY ACT**

The Minister of Transportation, Caroline Mulroney's (York—Simcoe) government bill passed 3rd Reading and awaits Royal Assent. Mulroney's bill would expand earlier measures to speed up the government's transit projects and spur highway and infrastructure construction.

### **BILL 236, SUPPORTING LOCAL RESTAURANTS ACT**

With all-party support, PC MPP Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria's (Brampton South), Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction, government bill that aims to cut restaurant delivery fees passed 3rd Reading and was granted Royal Assent within one week of introduction. In his initial comments on the legislation, Sakharia said, "This legislation will, if passed, provide measured, focused caps to the fees charged by food delivery apps. It would cap the rates charged by food delivery service companies and apps to 20 per cent for each transaction, with no more than 15 per cent for commission and 5 per cent for other fees, in areas where indoor dining is prohibited."

## **BILLS DEFEATED**

### **BILL 224, NO TIME TO WASTE ACT (PLAN FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND JOBS)**

The Progressive Conservatives defeated co-sponsors NDP MPPs Bhutila Karpoche (Parkdale—High Park) and Peter Tabuns (Toronto—Danforth) private member's bill that would require the Minister of Health to prepare Ontario's health system for health risks caused by climate change, at 2nd Reading. The bill would have also established a strategic action plan, a Climate Crisis and Health Secretariat, and a Science Advisory Board.

### **BILL 227, PUBLIC HEALTH ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (IN HONOUR OF DR. SHEELA BASRUR)**

NDP MPP France Gélinas (Nickel Belt) private member's bill would have made Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health an independent officer of the Ontario Legislature, instead of being a government appointee, was defeated at 2nd Reading by the Progressive Conservatives. The bill would have also established a select committee to deal with future public health crises.

## **IN OTHER NEWS**

### **LECCE ANNOUNCES PANDEMIC PAYMENTS FOR PARENTS**

Instead of providing more funding for smaller class sizes and safer schools during the pandemic, Education Minister Stephen Lecce (King—Vaughan) [announced](#) a second round of parental pandemic payments totaling \$380 million. Lecce wants to give families \$200 for each child up

to 12 and \$250 for each child with special needs up to the age of 21. In response to Lecce's announcement, OSSTF/FEESO President Harvey Bischof [said](#), "Parents need more than a \$200 rebate from their provincial government—they need safe schools and high quality education. The political populism of handing out individual cheques shouldn't distract from the government's core responsibility to provide equitable access to educational excellence across the publicly-funded system."

### **MOTION SEEKING MORE COLLABORATION WITH SCHOOL BOARDS, EDUCATORS ON SEX TRAFFICKING PASSES**

In the fight against human trafficking, particularly sex trafficking, MPPs from all parties supported the motion by PC MPP Robin Martin (Eglinton—Lawrence) [stating](#):

"I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government should mandate a collaborative approach for school boards, community police services and other partners to develop and adopt an anti-human trafficking protocol to prevent, identify and recognize human trafficking and develop responses to facilitate early and appropriate intervention."

In her speech, Martin [said](#), "Speaker, human traffickers prey on some of the most vulnerable members of our society: our children. Just to underscore this, the average age of recruitment into sex trafficking is 13 years old. Over 70% of human trafficking victims identified by police are under the age of 25. Young women and girls are particularly at risk, though boys, men and people who are 2SLGBTQ are also targeted. Risks are even greater for those from Indigenous communities and children and youth in care."

In supporting her motion, Martin discussed some local initiatives [including](#), "An excellent example is in York region. There, York Region District School Board has come together with York Regional Police and a number of community agencies, including BridgeNorth, a women's mentorship and advocacy service, to develop an effective partnership that includes education and awareness training for educators, parents and students."

While supporting Martin's motion, opposition MPPs asked Martin to also consider other factors that put young people at risk including program cutbacks by the same government that Martin belongs to and supports. NDP MPP Jill Andrew (Toronto—St. Paul's) [said](#), "Very early on in her speech, the member (Martin) said that youth in care are particularly vulnerable to trafficking, yet one of the first things this government did when they "got power" was the decision to cut the office of the provincial advocate for children and youth—guess what?—in care. That's an example of a way in which you don't dismantle the system and then create legislation that suggests that you care about the system that's breaking down some of our most vulnerable folks in community."

### **BILL 213, BETTER FOR PEOPLE, SMARTER FOR BUSINESS ACT**

Despite condemnation by many groups, including OSSTF/FEESO, the Standing Committee on General Government completed its hearings and review of Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria's (Brampton South) government bill that will, amongst other proposals, grant Charles McVety's Canada Christian School the

right to confer university-level degrees. Debate and a vote at 3rd Reading are expected prior to the Legislature's scheduled winter break recess on December 10. Groups condemning the bill cited McVety's long documented history of homophobia, Islamophobia and racism. As well, a [NDP motion](#) passed in the legislature denouncing the bill. Other proposals in the bill include:

- Require certain persons who wish to apply for a permit to take ground water for the purpose of producing bottled water to first seek the support of the council of the local municipality where the water will be taken;
- Allows the Financial Services Regulatory Authority to waive or change certain rules around pension plans, including the requirement for an administrator to give notice of a transfer of assets between pension plans, as well as the conversion of a plan from single-employer to jointly sponsored;
- Exempt from development charges the development of land intended for use by a university that receives operating funds from the government.

## **INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER AND ONTARIO OMBUDSMAN TERMS EXTENDED**

Ontario Integrity commissioner J. David Wake and Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé both had their terms extended for another five years until 2026. Their appointments were easily confirmed by a voice vote by all parties.

## **NDP MPP GILLES BISSON TO SEEK A NINTH TERM**

First elected in 1990 as part of the Bob Rae NDP government, long-time NDP House Leader Gilles Bisson (Timmins), and the longest-sitting current NDP MPP has decided to seek another term. Bisson was nominated by his local riding association and will be running in his ninth election.

## **NEW PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANT FOR FRANCOPHONE AFFAIRS**

With PC MPP Gila Martow (Thornhill) seeking the Conservative nomination in her concurrent federal riding, PC MPP Natalia Kusendova (Mississauga Centre) has been promoted to replace Martow in the role of Parliamentary Assistant for Francophone Affairs.