

# Queen's Park notes

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For the week of September 18–22, 2017

## NEW BILLS INTRODUCED

### BILL 155, LIFE LEASES ACT

Liberal MPP Ann Hoggarth (Barrie) introduced Bill 155, *Life Leases Act*. In proposing her bill, Hoggarth [said](#), “Life leases are a form of housing targeted towards seniors. Unfortunately, they are not covered by legislation in the province of Ontario. This bill provides that life leases be given protection, similar to renters and condo owners, by providing clear disclosure to leaseholders and improving communication with their sponsors.”

### BILL 156, INDIGENOUS DAY ACT

NDP MPP Mike Mantha (Algoma—Manitoulin) introduced Bill 156, *Indigenous Day Act* that would proclaim June 21 as Indigenous Day in Ontario. In his opening remarks, Mantha said, “Indigenous Day will be a public holiday under the *Employment Standards Act*, 2000. It will be a holiday under the *Retail Business Holidays Act*. It will be a school holiday under the *Education Act*. It will be a holiday under the acts and regulations that rely on a definition of holiday in the *Legislation Act*, 2006.”

## BILLS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

### BILL 126, ILLEGAL PILL PRESS ACT

PC MPP Michael Harris (Kitchener—Conestoga) introduced Bill 126, *Illegal Pill Press Act*. The bill would amend the *Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act* to prohibit a person from possessing or using designated pharmaceutical equipment unless the person is a pharmacist or a person acting under the supervision of a pharmacist. Harris’ bill is a direct result of the current opioid crisis facing Ontario and many communities across North America. The bill passed by voice vote and was referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

### BILL 146, TRANSPARENCY IN GAS PRICING ACT

PC MPP Monte McNaughton’s Bill 146, *Transparency in Gas Pricing Act*, would require Union Gas and Enbridge to include the cost of the cap-and-trade program on consumer bills. With the vote on the bill tied at 16-16 after debate concluded at 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, Liberal Deputy Speaker Soo Wong (Scarborough—Agincourt) cast the deciding vote to pass the bill to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

## BILLS PASSED

None.

## MOTIONS

PC Leader, Patrick Brown (Simcoe North), put forward a motion [stating](#), “I move that, in the opinion of this House, all contracts with the province of Quebec for excess imported power should be tabled with, and approved by the Legislative Assembly before being signed by the Premier or the Minister of Energy.” Brown added, “We are asking the Wynne Liberals to stop the secrecy and give ratepayers a say on the government’s attempt to negotiate secret backroom electricity deals with Quebec.” The Liberals disputed Brown’s claims insisting that no such deal was ever signed. Despite his efforts to further undermine the Liberals’ standing on hydro policies, Brown’s motion failed as the Liberals and NDP combined to defeat his motion.

## IN OTHER NEWS

In Question Period, PC Leader Patrick Brown raised the case of an eight-year-old elementary student who was restrained and injected with a sedative. Brown [said](#), “A young Toronto boy on the first day of school was taken to the hospital in the back of a police car, alone. The young boy was placed in restraints and then the boy was injected with a sedative. The boy was eight years old, injected with a sedative and shackled to a bed at a hospital. That is disgusting and unacceptable.”

Education Minister Mitzie Hunter (Scarborough—Guildwood) responded by saying that she could not comment on the particular case citing privacy concerns. Hunter added that the government is committed to helping all students by saying, “That is the focus: to have schools that are accepting and welcoming of students of all abilities. We are very committed to this and to providing the supports in our school system for students with special needs, for students who have mental health needs. We are providing the assistance and the supports for all of our students. We are working together to make those necessary investments so that students can have every opportunity to succeed in our schools.”

### **LGBTQ CHAMPION MPP DINOVO MOVES UP RETIREMENT DATE**

NDP MPP Cheri DiNovo (Parkdale—High Park), the Ontario Legislature’s most ardent supporter of LGBTQ rights, will resign her position effective January 2018. DiNovo, who had earlier announced that she would not seek re-election in the 2018 provincial election, moved up her retirement date by revealing that she would return to the clergy on a full-time basis beginning in January.

### **CROWN RESTS IN SUDBURY BY-ELECTION TRIAL**

The Crown finished presenting its witnesses in the Sudbury by-election trial. The trial centres on the allegations that Premier Kathleen Wynne’s former Chief of Staff, Patricia Sorbara, and a prominent local Liberal, Gerry Lougheed, attempted to bribe the 2014 Liberal candidate, Andrew Olivier, to stand aside so that the sitting Federal NDP MP Glenn Thibeault, could run for the provincial Liberals. Thus far, the trial has seen Premier Wynne and Provincial Cabinet Minister Thibeault both being called as witnesses. The trial is set to resume on October 22 with the defense expected to bring forward a motion to dismiss the case for lack of criminal evidence.