

## Queen's Park Today – Daily Report April 5, 2017

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### Quotation of the day

“If the objective is to move people and make more service available to them, I’m open to considering anything, including an arrangement [like the one in Innisfil].”

*Toronto Mayor John Tory [told NewsTalk 1010](#) he is open to considering a transit partnership with Uber, like the one currently being implemented in [Innisfil](#)*

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## Today at Queen's Park

### On the schedule

The House will convene at 9:00 a.m. to begin second reading debate on **Bill 114**, Anti-Racism Act. This bill allows the government to collect race-based data to investigate systemic racism.

In the afternoon, **Bill 96**, Anti-Human Trafficking Act, will continue to be debated at second reading.

### Debates and proceedings

MPPs convened at 9:00 a.m. to continue second reading debate on **Bill 87**, Protecting Patients Act. During debate, PC MPP **John Yakabuski** asked why the government wants access to doctors' private health records and former cabinet minister **Ted McMeekin** heckled “Because some doctors cheat.” The PCs called on McMeekin to apologize.

**Bill 87** passed second reading by unanimous voice vote after question period and was referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

NDP MPP **Cindy Forster** introduced a private members' bill entitled Fairness in First Contracts and the Right to Representation Act. **Bill 119** would make it easier for young workers to join a workplace union and for newly unionized workplaces to attain first contract binding arbitration.

In the afternoon, MPPs began third reading debate on **Bill 59**, Putting Consumers First Act.

### **In the park**

Conservation Ontario held a lobby day with a noon-hour reception. The Ontario Psychological Association also held a lobby day and had an afternoon reception scheduled for MPPs.

The Ontario Autism Coalition held a news conference in the Legislative Building on improving educational supports for children with autism.

### **Federal by-elections (in Ontario)**

Liberal candidate **Mona Fortier** won the federal by-election in Ottawa—Vanier with 51 per cent of the vote. NDP candidate **Emilie Taman** finished in second with 29 per cent of the vote.

In Markham—Thornhill, Liberal candidate and former PMO staffer **Mary Ng** won the riding with 51 per cent of the vote. Conservative candidate **Ragavan Paranthooy** came in second with 39 per cent of the vote, which was considered a surprisingly strong showing.

### **Topics of conversation**

- This *Toronto Star* story lays out the City of Toronto's provincial [budget asks](#).
- The Ontario Liberal Party jumped on PC Deputy Leader **Steve Clark's** announcement that he is [supporting Kevin O'Leary](#) in the CPC leadership race.
  - The Libs called Clark's endorsement "insubordination" of **Patrick Brown** because O'Leary said last fall that he would campaign against Brown and "make sure he stays out of power" if he continues to support putting a price on carbon.
- The Ontario NDP will hold its annual conference at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre from April 21 to 23.
- The Real Estate Council of Ontario announced that beginning in July 2019, Humber College and NIIT Canada will take over from OREA as the only licensed providers of estate education in the province.
- PC members of the Standing Committee on General Government introduced a motion requesting a study of upcoming public sector executive salary hikes. PC committee members want Treasury Board President **Liz Sandals** to testify on the matter, but the motion must first be passed by the committee.

- The Better Way Alliance, a new [organization](#) of employers promoting the economic benefits of paying workers a living wage, is advocating for government leadership on decent work in advance of the release of the Changing Workplaces Review.

## Today's committee meetings

### Standing Committee on Public Accounts

- Wednesday, April 5 at 9:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
  - Room 151
  - The committee will consider a section for the 2016 Auditor General's report on Large Community Hospital Operations.
    - Representatives from the following organizations are scheduled to appear:
      - Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
      - Rouge Valley Health System
      - Trillium Health Partners
      - Windsor Regional Hospital

### Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly

- Wednesday, April 5 at 1:00 p.m.
  - Room 1
  - The committee will meet to continue its study on electronic petitions.

## Today's events



**April 5 at 9:00 a.m. — Toronto**

Digital Government Minister **Deb Matthews** will make an announcement at Shopify, 80 Spadina Avenue.



**April 5 at 9:30 a.m. — Toronto**

NDP MPP **Cheri DiNovo** will make an announcement at Queen's Park with Toronto City Councillor **Kristyn Wong Tam** and a representative from Women's Habitat of Etobicoke.



**April 5 at 12:00 p.m. — Toronto**

Premier **Kathleen Wynne** will hold a cabinet meeting at Queen's Park.



### April 5 at 12:00 p.m. — Toronto

The Canadian Club will host **Fred Gibbons**, president of Northern College and chair of Colleges Ontario, to discuss “Rethinking College Education in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.” The event will take place at One King West Hotel.



### April 5 at 1:00 p.m. — Toronto

Children and Youth Services Minister **Michael Coteau** will make an announcement at the Youth Action Network, 1489 Dupont Street.

## News briefs – Non-governmental

### Ontario Public Service Employees’ Union

OPSEU’s LCBO workers scheduled a province-wide strike vote for April 24 or 25. The union’s contract expired on March 31 and it has since requested the Ministry of Labour appoint a conciliator. OPSEU president **Smokey Thomas** said his “members are fighting to save the LCBO” from the “creeping privatization” that allowed beer sales in grocery stores.

OPSEU also announced it has filed with the Ministry of Labour to represent contract faculty at Ontario’s colleges. Thomas called it one of the largest organizing drives in Canadian history with thousands of cards signed. Thomas said unionizing contract workers is important because “we’ve reached the point where 70 per cent of those teaching are underpaid contract faculty with no job security.”

## Question period

### PC lead off

#### Autism treatment

- Following the release of a [report](#) from the Ontario Autism Coalition, PC leader **Patrick Brown** went after the government over its failure to provide adequate special needs funding.
  - He called for a transparent review of the Ministry of Education’s special needs funding formula.
  - The report also calls for the hiring of more educational assistants and more accountability for money transferred to school boards.
- Education Minister **Mitzi Hunter** said the province spends \$2.7 billion on special needs education and four times as many students with autism are reaching post-secondary school than in the past.

- Hunter discussed her Tuesday morning visit to one of the two schools in Etobicoke that the province is proposing to acquire from the TDSB and convert to community hubs that could be used as autism services centres.
- Deputy Premier **Deb Matthews** said when Brown was an MP in Ottawa, he voted against a bill that would have set up a national autism strategy.
- Children and Youth Services Minister **Michael Coteau** said the government is launching a new direct-funding autism services plan in June that will create 16,000 new spaces for children with autism.
  - Coteau also said anyone currently receiving transition funding will continue to until the new plan is in place.

## **NDP lead off**

### **Executive compensation**

- NDP leader **Andrea Horwath** called on the government to end high executive salaries and instead raise the minimum wage for the rest of Ontarians.
- Labour Minister **Kevin Flynn** said his government took the advice of business and labour advocates and made minimum wage hikes predictable and tied to inflation.
- Flynn said he has received the final report on the Changing Workplaces Review.
  - He said it is being translated and will be released to the public in three to four weeks.

### **Rent control**

- NDP MPP **Peter Tabuns** asked about [tenants](#) from two Liberty Village condos whose landlords doubled their rent to \$3,300 per month. Tabuns called on the government to end the post-1991 rent control loophole.
- Community and Social Services Minister **Helena Jaczek** said this is “exactly why we are developing a plan to address unfair rises in rental costs by delivering substantive rent control reform in Ontario.”
  - A [report](#) from CIBC said new rent controls are the “exact opposite of what is needed” to increase rental supply and keep prices low.