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In This Issue

- 1 What's Going on in the Legislature
- 1 Forum Poll Shows Strong Support for PCs
- 2 Health Minister Resigns – Another Blow to the Wynne Government
- 3 Values/Beliefs of Ontario Political Party Supporters – Where Do You Fit?
- 4 The PC Leadership Soap Opera Continues

What's Going on in the Legislature

The Ontario Legislature reconvened for the Spring session on February 20th. There are currently five Government Bills on the order paper:

1. [Bill 193, Rowan's Law \(Concussion Safety\), 2018](#)
2. [Bill 194, Fairness in Procurement Act, 2018](#)
3. [Bill 195, Correctional Services Transformation Act, 2018](#)
4. [Bill 196, Supply Act, 2018](#)
5. [Bill 199, Access to Consumer Credit Reports and Elevator Availability Act, 2018](#)

Bill 194, the government's proportional response to "Buy American" laws in several US states, is the top priority.

The government appears to be in a "caretaker" mode until its Spring budget which will lay out the Liberal platform for the June 7th general election.

Forum Poll Shows Strong Support for PCs

According to the results of a random sampling of public opinion among 949 Ontario voters conducted by Forum Research and published on February 17, 2018:

- 49% said they would support the PCs if an election were held today up from 42% in the January 25, 2018 poll.
- 24% said they would support the Liberals down from 27% in the January 25, 2018 poll.

- 19% said they would support the NDP, down from 23% in the January 25, 2018 poll.
- 7% said they would support the Greens. Up from 6% in the January 25, 2018 poll.
- The polling results extrapolate to a Legislature in which the PCs would form government with 93 seats with the NDP serving as the official opposition with 21 seats and the Liberals as the third party with 10 seats
- The polling included supporters of all political parties and not just Ontario PC Party members who will be voting for their party's leader; that said, 22% said Christine Elliott would make the best leader of the Ontario PC Party, 16% said Doug Ford would make the best leader, 14% said Caroline Mulroney would make the best leader, 5% said Tanya Granic Allen would make the best leader and 31% said they didn't know

For the complete report click on this link <http://poll.forumresearch.com/post/2831/brown-enters-race-2018/>

Health Minister Resigns – Another Blow to the Wynne Government

Unexpectedly, on the afternoon of Monday, February 25, just three months before the general election, Dr. Eric Hoskins resigned as Minister of Health and Long Term Care in the Ontario government of Premier Kathleen Wynne and as the MPP for the mid-town Toronto riding of St Paul's.

In his statement Hoskins said, "In leaving Queen's Park, I am determined to continue building better healthcare for all Canadians. That path and journey will become clearer in the days ahead." Following his resignation it became known that Hoskins will lead a federal commission to investigate options for the implementation of a national Pharmacare program.

Dr. Helena Jaczek will succeed Hoskins as the minister of health and long-term care and Michael Coteau will take on Jaczek's former role as minister of community and social services in addition to his current roles as minister of children and youth services and minister responsible for anti-racism.

Hoskins resignation is the fourth resignation by cabinet ministers serving in the Wynne government. The others are Deb Matthews, Brad Duguid and Liz Sandals.

St. Paul's is considered to be a fairly safe Liberal seat but riding association will have to scramble to identify a viable candidate to run in the June 7th general election.

Values/Beliefs of Ontario Political Party Supporters – Where Do You Fit?

Summary of an article by Michael Adams and Tony Coulson of Environics that appeared in The Globe & Mail on February 11, 2018

Ontario PC Party Supporters:

- Hold traditional views around family structures, gender roles and religion
- Are more likely than other partisans to believe that “the father of the family must be the master in his own home.”
- Believe that those in positions of authority deserve deference
- Believe in the value of rule-following over flexibility and questioning
- Law and order works for this crowd.
- Prioritize economic issues more strongly than others do
- Support economic development, even at the expense of pollution or environmental damage
- Express more concern about their personal economic futures
- Prefer private-sector solutions to societal problems
- Hold a stronger-than-average trust in big business
- Favour strict limits on the role of government
- Are less likely than other Ontarians to worry about the environment or to prioritize environmentally friendly products or companies

Ontario Liberal Party Supporters:

- Are more open and flexible in terms of family structures, relations between generations and hierarchy in organizations
- Reject patriarchy and question traditional authority – both religious and secular.
- Consider themselves to be “citizens of the world” rather than “citizens of one community or country
- Believe that that it’s valuable to meet and converse with different kinds of people, from all kinds of backgrounds
- Are at ease in a multicultural Ontario

- Are less insistent that newcomers must set aside aspects of their identities in order to assimilate.
- Are less likely to believe that environmental problems are an acceptable cost of doing business.
- Believe people and industries can and should prevent ecological harm, and fix any damage they've done – even if it costs money, jobs or growth.

Ontario NDP supporters hold many of the same values as Liberals, in relation to family, authority, multiculturalism and the environment.

The PC Leadership Soap Opera Continues

The soap opera that is the Ontario PC Party leadership race continues with yet another surprise, less than two weeks after entering the contest, Patrick Brown withdraws as a candidate for the leadership.

In submitting his formal withdrawal Brown cited the following reasons:

- He wants to focus on clearing his name
- He wants to focus on his law suit against CTV for attacking him with “slandorous reporting”
- He wants to put an end to the attacks being made against his family members, his friends and supporters that have been caused by his candidacy
- He wants to end the distraction that his candidacy and the allegations of inappropriate sexual behaviour brought to the leadership race

In withdrawing, Brown stated that he would continue to be strong PC supporter.

It's not clear if Brown will be cleared by the Party to run in the June 7th general election. That decision may be made by the eventual winner of the leadership.

Brown withdrew shortly after the Integrity Commissioner announced that his office has launched an investigation into Brown's affairs pursuant to a complaint lodged with the Commission by MPP Randy Hillier. The complaint alleges that Brown failed to report all sources of his income as required because his reported income would not support his heavily mortgaged \$2.3 million home and his extensive his travel which sometimes included his girlfriend.

It is also believed that Brown ordered Ontario PC Party officials to make sure the PC nomination meeting in the Hamilton West-Ancaster-Dundas riding produced the candidate he preferred. Local police are investigating possible irregularities.