



OPPOSITION DAY

LIBERAL CAMPAIGN PROMISES

October 4, 2006

Mr. John Tory (Leader of the Opposition): I move that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that it has been three years since the Liberals took office;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that shortly after taking office the Liberals and their Premier began breaking their promises;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that ever since the Liberals broke their first promise, they have looked high and low for others to blame;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that the only people to blame for making these promises are the Liberals themselves;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize that with one year to go before the next election, the Liberals must begin taking responsibility for the promises that they themselves made;

That the Legislative Assembly recognize that this list of broken promises includes, but is not limited to, the following 50 broken promises:

- (1) "I won't raise your taxes";
- (2) Roll back tolls on the 407;
- (3) Fund medically necessary health care services...;
- (4) Not add to the province's debt;
- (5) Stop 6,600 houses from being built on the Oak Ridges moraine;
- (6) Abide by the balanced budget law;
- (7) Cap hydro rates at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour until 2006;
- (8) Respect MPPs and democracy;

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- (9) Allow all non-cabinet MPPs to criticize and vote against government legislation;
- (10) Provide autism treatment beyond age six;
- (11) Reduce auto insurance rates by 10% within 90 days;
- (12) Reduce the use of private consultants;
- (13) Cancel P3 hospitals in Brampton and Ottawa;
- (14) Public inquiry into meat inspection;
- (15) Withdraw government appeal on the Richmond landfill;
- (16) Make Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health an independent officer of the Legislature;
- (17) Govern with honesty and integrity;
- (18) Provide better mental health care;
- (19) Value and support the public service;
- (20) Divert 60% of municipal garbage to recycling by 2005;
- (21) Close "private" MRI and CT clinics;
- (22) Stop school closings;
- (23) Introduce status-of-the-artist legislation;
- (24) Close coal-fired electricity plants by 2007;
- (25) Create tens of thousands of new child care spaces;
- (26) End federal child tax credit "clawback";
- (27) Build 20,000 new affordable housing units;
- (28) Spend "every penny" of the new health tax on health care;
- (29) Eliminate barriers to foreign-trained professionals within one year;
- (30) Require trades and professions to accept qualified immigrants within one year;

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- (31) Repeal the Tenant Protection Act within one year;
- (32) Establish a standing committee on education to hold yearly hearings;
- (33) Hire 8,000 nurses;
- (34) Provide legal rights to victims of crime;
- (35) Make the Ministry of Agriculture a lead ministry;
- (36) Support the province's cities;
- (37) Ensure health dollars are spent wisely;
- (38) Stop the waste of taxpayers' dollars;
- (39) Guarantee stable, long-term funding for our rural and northern communities;
- (40) Operate an open and transparent government;
- (41) Provide a new funding formula for rural and northern schools;
- (42) Hard cap of 20 students for early grades;
- (43) Ensure 75% of students meet or exceed the provincial standard on province-wide tests within first mandate;
- (44) Tackle gridlock;
- (45) Give taxpayers better value for money while keeping taxes down;
- (46) Eliminate mercury emissions from its coal-fired electric power generation plants by 2010 as part of the Canada-wide standard (CWS) agreement;
- (47) Balance the budget every year of their mandate;
- (48) Put the public interest ahead of special interests;
- (49) Unclog emergency rooms; and
- (50) Give the Ministry of Natural Resources the resources to protect fish and wildlife.

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario recognize this government's endless promise-breaking has left a trail of damage across this province;

That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario ask the Premier to apologize to the citizens of Ontario for his legacy of broken promises.

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Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington): I suppose it's unnecessary to begin by saying that I support this motion, which is intended to draw attention to the issue of integrity in politics. A cynic might suggest that integrity and politics are mutually exclusive concepts; however, I would tend to disagree. I believe integrity is fundamental in government.

David Gergen, who has served as a close adviser to both Republican and Democrat presidents alike, once said that in politics, if you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don't have integrity, nothing else matters. I believe he's right.

A few years ago, the member for Ottawa South, then leader of the Ontario Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition, visited Waterloo-Wellington in an attempt to criticize the government of the day for the environmental problems at a plant in Elmira formerly known as Uniroyal, then Crompton and now Chemtura. After his visit, he was quoted in one of our local newspapers as having said, "I'll raise this issue in the House." That's what Dalton McGuinty said.

I'd been involved with the environmental issues at Crompton for some time, working behind the scenes to try to be helpful, so I was quite interested in what questions he might ask in this House. I expected that Mr. McGuinty would ask his question about Crompton on the first day back: He did not. I thought he might ask his question the first week back: He did not. I thought he might ask the question within a month of his visit, but he did not. In fact, to the best of my recollection, he never did raise the issue, and if I'm incorrect, I'm sure the Liberal staffers in the Premier's office will let me know.

I do recall that in a subsequent visit to Elmira, Mr. McGuinty was asked by the local press why he hadn't raised the issue as he had said he would do, and of course he had no substantive answer.

I'm relaying this true anecdote to the House at this time because it illustrates the exact point this motion is making: Some politicians will say whatever they think you want to hear to get your vote, and then forget they've even said it; but the people of Ontario can't forget, and they won't be played for fools by this Liberal government.

One year from today, when the voters of Ontario exercise their franchise, they will not overlook the 50 Liberal broken promises outlined in this motion. If the government MPPs think otherwise, they are deluding themselves.

I'm not anticipating that very many of the Liberal MPPs will support this motion, but if they were to follow the dictates of their conscience instead of their whip, I know that some of them would.

For the rest of us, we can only hope for a day, one year from today, when integrity is restored in Ontario politics.