



NEWS RELEASE

Ted Arnott, MPP
Wellington - Halton Hills

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 6, 2011

Auditor General issues scathing indictment of Liberal Government, says MPP Arnott

(Queen's Park) – Wellington Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott says that yesterday's Auditor General's report delivered a scathing indictment of the Government's mismanagement of a number of key policy areas. Topping the list was the government's handling of the green energy file and the debt retirement charge on electricity.

"The Auditor General's report validates what Tim Hudak and the PC caucus have been saying all along – the government has hopelessly mismanaged the energy file, resulting in higher hydro rates for all Ontarians," said Mr. Arnott.

The Auditor General pointed out that the government has pursued their green energy agenda with little regard for the impacts it would have on ordinary Ontarians. He concluded that the government proceeded to make a massive investment in renewable energy while failing to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the economic and environmental effects of the investment.

The Auditor General reported that despite Government claims that the green energy sector will create 50,000 jobs, 30,000 of those jobs will be temporary construction jobs. Furthermore, studies in other jurisdictions indicate that for every job created through renewable energy programs, 2 to 4 jobs are often lost in other sectors due to higher electricity prices.

He also reprimanded the Government for rushing into green energy contracts, such as the \$7 billion Samsung deal, with little or no due diligence to determine if it was economically viable or cost-effective.

Similarly, the debt retirement charge has been used to collect \$8.7 billion to pay off a debt that was only \$7.8 billion. The Auditor General noted that the Minister of Finance is required by law to periodically outline how much debt remains, something that the Minister has failed to do.

"The government's waste and mismanagement of this issue is putting a strain on businesses across Ontario and costing the province jobs," said Mr. Arnott. "With the release of this year's Auditor General's revelations, the McGuinty Government owes Ontario taxpayers an apology."

Mr. Arnott argued that someone must be held accountable for the government's handling of the file: "Who is ever held accountable after the Auditor's report? Why doesn't the Premier call his Ministers on the carpet?"

The Auditor General's report can be found at: http://www.auditor.on.ca/en/reports_2011_en.htm

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