

## From Queen's Park by Sylvia Jones MPP ? Welcome to new Progressive Conservative leader



I want to congratulate Patrick Brown on becoming the new Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario. Through this leadership race, nearly 80,000 members from across Ontario signed up to participate in the vote. His experience as the MP for Barrie since 2006 and Chair of the GTA and Central Ontario Caucus has allowed him to cultivate relationships with both urban and rural communities. He is a driven and passionate leader with bold ideas, who will do what is best for Ontario. Patrick understands that our ballooning hydro rates are a major concern for Ontarians and would be one of his top priorities as Premier. Having affordable energy will result in a strong and competitive economy. We now stand behind our new Leader who will restore our province as the economic engine of Canada.

In his first speech in the Ontario Legislature, welcoming Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard, Patrick discussed the important relationship between Quebec and Ontario that has existed throughout their history. He also stressed the need to continue cultivating that special relationship.

Patrick also praised Premier Couillard's leadership in ensuring Quebec has affordable energy rates and making a balanced budget a top priority. He stressed that Quebec realized that to have a strong and competitive economy, you need to have affordable energy rates. As noted in his speech, he states "low hydro rates mean a better business climate. Companies see these rates as a cost of doing business rather than a barrier to doing business." This is evident by the fact that businesses like Xstrata Copper decided to set up shop in the province. Low energy rates have also led to job growth in Quebec.

Through low energy rates, families and individuals in Quebec can now better manage their own budgets, instead of worrying of how they will be able to pay their skyrocketing hydro bills. As a result of all this, Quebec was able to balance its budget and continue growing its economy.

Unfortunately, under the Liberal government's leadership Ontario has seen hydro rates triple and resulted in businesses leaving and job losses. In addition, we have seen the government's inability to tackle the deficit and no plan in sight to balance the budget by 2017-2018. Patrick believes that we need to look to the successes of Quebec and follow in their footsteps. Through affordable hydro rates, it will lead to job growth, and result in businesses flocking to set up shop in our province. Once this is achieved, our economy will turn back into what it once was as Canada's economic engine.