

Government slammed on partisan advertising

Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones is jumping on the government over the recent Auditor General report, which shows that \$17.4 million was spent so the government of Premier Kathleen Wynne could blow its own horn.

According to the Auditor General's 2017 report, the Wynne Liberals spent \$17.4 million on partisan government advertising," Jones said. "The Auditor has said that the primary goal of these ads were to foster a positive impression of the government party."

Jones said this includes a \$3 million infrastructure campaign which the auditor said was, "self-congratulatory and aimed at ensuring that the government gets credit for its potential future spending plans."

"We also learned that the government ad budget jumped by 33 per cent in one year," Jones added. "Are Ontarians to take it as a coincidence that the government has substantially increased its advertising by 33 per cent, the year before an election?"

She also charged the government has failed to mention that they were the ones who watered down the legislation, and weakened the Auditor General's oversight over government.

"The AG's report shows that there is a massive loophole in the government's legislation," she declared. "The loophole has allowed the government to spend nearly \$5 million on digital ads with zero oversight by the Auditor General."

Jones pointed out the Progressive Conservatives have pledged to return the Auditor General's oversight position on government advertising. She wondered if the Liberals are prepared to do the same.