

Jones not taken with new cabinet

By Bill Rea

Premier Kathleen Wynne shuffled her cabinet last week, but that shouldn't bring many positive results, as far as Sylvia Jones is concerned.

The new cabinet has 30 members, including seven who have been promoted from the back benches. Twelve members of the cabinet are women, amounting to 40 per cent.

Jones, MPP for Dufferin-Caledon, is also the children and youth services critic for the Progressive Conservative caucus, and she said she was pleased to see Wynne gave that file to someone else.

"I'm happy that the former minister of Children and Youth has been shuffled out," Jones said.

The former minister, Tracy MacCharles, has now taken on the responsibility for Women's Issues and Accessibility. Michael Coteau is now in charge of Children and Youth Services, as well as anti-racism, having been moved from Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Jones said she found it frustrating to get answers from MacCharles.

She was also not too taken with the size of the new cabinet, pointing out only three people were dropped, and they had all announced their resignations before the shuffle. They were Mario Sergio, who was responsible for seniors's issues, former attorney general Madeleine Meilleur and Ted McMeekin, who had been in charge of municipal affairs and housing.

"I think it's too big," Jones declared. "I don't think we need half of the entire Liberal caucus in cabinet."

She also speculated that Wynne is trying to buy loyalty with the promotions.

She didn't think this will help Wynne much.

"She has put such a brand on that Liberal government," Jones commented. "It's clearly her agenda; her mandate."

Jones added the new faces won't make much of a difference.