

Sylvia Jones MPP ? You cannot spend your way out of debt, and neither can government

Ten years of Liberal taxing and spending has eliminated Ontario's competitive advantage and has driven business, investments and valuable jobs out of the province.

We see this locally, as manufacturers have been forced to close their doors or move their operations to other jurisdictions. Too many Dufferin-Caledon residents are without a job.

Finance Minister Charles Sousa presented his first budget in the Ontario Legislature May 2.

Unfortunately, like so many of the other Liberal budgets we have seen, it does nothing to change the direction Ontario is heading and it completely ignores the insurmountable debt Ontarians collectively face. Ontario's debt is now higher than all Canadian provinces and territories combined, doubling from \$139 billion in 2003 to \$273 billion in 2013.

Instead of recognizing the severity of the debt problem and initiating measures to reverse this trend, the Liberal budget proposes to increase spending by \$3.6 billion; including \$1 billion in new initiatives put in to gain the support of the NDP.

You cannot spend your way out of debt. This Liberal budget is an exercise in profligacy at the expense of Ontarians, once again, to try and win the NDP's favour in the hopes of avoiding an election. You will recall that the NDP did not support the budget in 2012. Instead, they abdicated their responsibility and chose to abstain from the vote, allowing the budget to pass.

If the NDP support this Liberal budget by voting in favour or abstaining from the vote, then they are accepting and supporting the Liberal government's reckless spending, the shameful \$585 million wasted on the cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants, and complete lack of response to the provincial debt.

Ontario needs a government that has a plan to reduce spending, create jobs and has the courage to make the difficult decisions. The only way to help Ontario become strong again is to set a new course with a new team.

Those who believed that Premier Kathleen Wynne was going to be different from her predecessor Dalton McGuinty need only study the new spending initiatives her government announced in its budget.

Spending has increased by \$3.6 billion.

That and new spending initiatives has created a budget deficit of \$11.7 billion.

When Don Drummond's report was released in February 2012, it was supposed to be used as a road map to begin reversing the tide of overspending. Instead, after investing in the report, the Liberal government is implementing only partial measures that will not come close to solving our debt crisis.

The fact is, a child born in Ontario today is saddled with \$20,000 of provincial debt. It is the legacy Dalton McGuinty and Kathleen Wynne have chosen to leave our children and grandchildren to pay. I refuse to sit on my hands and watch Ontario slip further into a hole that will take generations to recover, and that is why I will be voting against the 2013 Liberal budget.

