

The real impact of the federal carbon tax on essential services

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We all know the federal government's carbon tax will increase the cost of everything for the people of Dufferin-Caledon. But have you ever stopped to consider the impact it'll have on essential services we rely on, such as public safety or health care?

Here's an example. The OPP relies on a fleet of over 4000 vehicles across Ontario. Including the additional HST cost, the carbon tax will increase the price of gasoline in Ontario by 5 cents per litre, every time a police cruiser, fire truck, or ambulance fills up their tank. And this is only the beginning. The federal carbon tax will increase the price of gasoline by 11.1 cents in the next 3 years.

That means the federal carbon tax will cost the OPP more than \$2 million by 2022.

Here's another example. The increased heating cost to our province's correctional institutions and OPP detachments is \$1.4 million as a result of the federal government's carbon tax.

So with just those two line items ? fuel for OPP vehicles and heating at detachments and jails ? \$3.4 million will be drained from frontline public safety.

What could we do with \$3.4 million? We could purchase nearly 24,000 life-saving naloxone kits. Or 6300 bulletproof vests that protect our heroes on the frontlines. We could acquire 98 roadside drug-testing devices to keep our roads safe.

The federal carbon tax will also hurt our healthcare system.

The federal carbon tax will increase yearly heating costs at hospitals by \$10.9 million in 2019, rising to \$27.2 million in 2022. Our seniors will also be hurt by the carbon tax. It will cost retirement and nursing homes \$6.7 million in additional heating costs in 2019, rising to \$16.7 million by 2022.

What's most troubling about this drain on frontline services is the fact that Ontario has proven a carbon tax isn't even necessary to protect the environment. We established the Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan to reduce our emissions to 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. This will meet the Paris Agreement commitments, without having to implement a carbon tax in Ontario. Based on our progress since 2005, Ontario has reduced emissions by 22 percent, while the rest of Canada has increased emissions by 3 percent. British Columbia has a carbon tax and their total greenhouse gas emissions increased by 1.5% from 2015 to 2016.

The Ontario Government is focused on providing an emissions performance standard for high emitters that will reduce emissions. Ontario's Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan is focused on encouraging investment in environmentally-friendly technology, investing an additional \$5 billion to provide improvements to public transit, reducing waste and litter, and providing grants for environmentally-friendly technology through the Ontario Carbon Trust.

Finally, the Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan will not increase costs for the OPP, drivers, hospitals, or retirement and nursing homes, in Dufferin-Caledon. We're protecting what matters most ? including frontline services and the environment.

The Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan can be accessed through this link.

If you have any feedback about the environment plan, please call me at 1-800-265-1603 or email sylvia.jonesco@pc.ola.org.