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April 15, 2016

The Honourable Glen Murray
Minister of the Environment and Climate Change
11th Floor, Ferguson Block
77 Wellesley St. West
Toronto, ON, M7A 2T5

Dear Minister Murray,

We both agree that climate change is a serious environmental challenge that must be addressed. However, our Caucuses disagree on the best way to effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In March, Leader of the Official Opposition Patrick Brown was quite clear that our Caucus supports a *revenue-neutral plan* that is subject to rigorous oversight. Unfortunately, you have done the opposite. Of course, we understand your government's motivation. By setting up a complex emissions-trading scheme, you can raise \$1.9 billion to finance a new slush fund – all while claiming it is for the environment. But we both know that is not the truth.

You specifically designed the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account to allow the government to spend cap-and-trade funds on virtually anything it wants – with no accountability. In fact, the Financial Accountability Officer stated in his testimony before committee that he would “likely be unable to access” spending plans related to this account. That means your government can decide which companies and organizations will receive nearly \$2 billion in new tax revenue behind closed doors.

This lack of transparency is only one of many flaws with Bill 172. Businesses from across the province have cautioned your government to stop rushing this proposed legislation through the House. They have warned your cap-and-trade scheme could shut out investment in Ontario's industries and lead to job loss, which your government has euphemistically referred to as “carbon leakage.” The message from Ontario's businesses is clear: slow down and take your time to get carbon pricing right.

Unfortunately, you have ignored the concerns of business and rejected the recommendations of the Financial Accountability Officer. Instead, you have plowed ahead



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with Bill 172, tabling an almost unprecedented number of amendments to your own bill. With more than 70 Liberal amendments before the Standing Committee on General Government right now, it is clear that your Caucus members are rewriting the bill on the fly. This band-aid solution is unacceptable.

Ontarians are rightly concerned to see your government frantically rewriting this proposed legislation with little to no input. After all, it is taxpayers who will have to foot the bill for your cap-and-trade scheme. In fact, Ontarians will be forced to spend nearly \$900 more a year on gasoline and home-heating while dealing with price increases on virtually every other product they buy.

It is obvious that you rushed Bill 172, so Premier Kathleen Wynne had a PR document to take along to her photo-op with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in Vancouver earlier this year. But now it is time to put the interests of our province first. That is why our Caucus is calling on you to withdraw this flawed bill. You should shelve your current scheme and begin working on a new revenue-neutral plan that supports economic growth and maintains rigorous oversight. Climate change is just too important to get this issue wrong.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa".

Lisa Thompson, MPP
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