

Chudleigh column - Halton Compass - November 06

Handling of economy is irresponsible

Talk about money mismanagement.

The McGuinty Liberals have yet again restated their economic forecasts, this time painting a gloomy picture of Ontario's economic fortunes. They've done it to set up a triumphal and magical turn around just in time for next spring's election budget.

And while there is cause for concern in the Ontario economy, chiefly in the manufacturing and construction sectors, the Liberals' blatant disregard for taxpayers and their money through this creation of a budget crisis, is irresponsible.

Instead of controlling spending and building on the unexpected success of a last year's balanced budget due to higher than expected tax revenues of \$3.6 billion, the Liberals' are hiking spending to create a budget deficit. Spending is now \$6.9 billion ahead of the Liberals' already inflated spending plan issued in the last election.

The McGuinty Liberals have no real plan for the Ontario economy and simply careen from crisis to crisis. Now they've taken to the old blame game and tried to shift the blame for their budget woes to the federal government.

Pointing his finger at everybody else is a specialty of Premier McGuinty who simply will not take the responsibility for his say-anything, promise-anything election strategy. Add to that a disregard for the value of hard-earned tax dollars spent dropping the C from the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation, redesigning the Trillium logo, buying out developers at Caledonia, and reinventing the wheel on local health care planning by moving from Community Care Access Centres (CCACs) to Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs).

More than 100,000 families have lost jobs in manufacturing this year and still the Premier fiddles with budget deficits while he burns your tax dollars. Farmers and the forest industry are also experiencing problems that the Liberal government has either claimed are someone else's responsibility or they have ignored entirely.

In the economic update the McGuinty Liberals paid some lip service to our manufacturing woes but they avoided taking any action on tax issues or utility costs which are fuelling the downturn in the sector.

Lip service doesn't save jobs. Avoiding the root causes doesn't fix the problem. Taking the ostrich approach and ignoring the problem is not an option. Too many Ontario families are facing significant reductions in their income and a corresponding down turn in their circumstances as our economy deteriorates.