

PM unveils \$10/day daycare deal with New Brunswick^[1]

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EXCERPTS

As MPs head into the final week of the fall sitting, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will start his day by “virtually joining” New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs for the official reveal of a \$10-a-day daycare deal that, as the Star reported last week, is expected to include nearly half a billion dollars in federal funding — and will leave Ontario as “the only remaining holdout province.”

Also scheduled to take part in the hybrid media event, which, according to the PMO-issued advisory, will take place in the Sir John A. Macdonald Building media room: newly installed Social Development Minister Karina Gould and her New Brunswick counterpart Dominic Cardy, who will appear via video from Fredericton, as well as Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc and Official Languages Minister Ginette Petitpas Taylor, who will “virtually join from Moncton.” (9:30 AM)

Meanwhile, with just one day to go before she delivers her second-ever fall fiscal update, Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland will team up with Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem to formally unveil the central bank’s renewed mandate, which isn’t expected to deliver any market-jarring shocks. It won’t change the current inflation target of two per cent, either, but will “add new guidance to consider employment levels when it makes its decisions,” according to a weekend report in the Globe and Mail. (11 AM)

Back in the precinct, New Democrat seniors critic Rachel Blaney and Finance critic Daniel Blaikie will “once again call on Justin Trudeau and his Liberal government to reverse the cut (to) the Guaranteed Income Supplement,” which, according to the advisory, their party wants to happen “before the House rises by the end of the week.” (9:15 AM)

Later this afternoon, Defence Minister Anita Anand, Chief of Defence Staff Wayne Eyre and Deputy Minister of Defence Jody Thomas will deliver — on behalf of the federal government, the Canadian Armed Forces, and National Defence, respectively — a “virtual public apology to all current and former members of the Defence team who have been affected by sexual assault, sexual harassment, or discrimination based on sex, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation,” which will streamed live on the Canadian Armed Forces Facebook page, according to the advisory. (1 PM)

Finally, Chief Public Health Officer Theresa Tam holds a virtual news conference to discuss her latest annual report, which is set to be tabled in the House later today. (12 PM)

According to its title, it will offer “a vision to transform Canada’s public health system,” although, with the Omicron variant causing renewed concern, there’s a good chance Tam will spend most of her time fielding questions about the risk of a post-holiday surge in infections, and when booster shots should be distributed across the country.

Also on the Hill radar this morning: Canadian Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez is booked in for a one-hour session at FINANCE, which, as reported by iPolitics last week, is scheduled to wrap up its accelerated review of Freeland’s latest pandemic-benefits package later today. (11 AM – 1 PM)

Depending on how the committee chooses to proceed, that could involve modifying — or expanding — certain sections of the bill via amendment, which may be required for the government to secure the necessary support to meet its self-imposed deadline to pass the bill before the House rises for the holidays at the end of the week.

Among the key changes demanded by the Bloc Québécois is more direct, targeted support for workers in the arts and cultural sector, which will likely come up during the back-and-forth with Rodriguez. Also on the witness list for this morning are Auditor General Karen Hogan, Canadian Labour Congress president Bea Bruske, and a still-to-be-named senior official from the Canada Revenue Agency.

Elsewhere on the committee circuit, several are set to assemble for the first time since the sitting got underway to elect their respective chair and vice-chairs: HUMAN RESOURCES, ETHICS, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, CANADIAN HERITAGE, INTERNATIONAL TRADE and HEALTH, as well as the newly struck SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AFGHANISTAN, which was established via a Conservative-initiated supply motion that was adopted over the objections of the government, and has been tasked with examining Canada’s response to the fall of the Afghan government and subsequent takeover by the Taliban.

IN THE CHAMBER

With the omnibus pandemic-aid bill still working its way through committee, MPs will start the final week of the sitting by kicking off the opening round of debate on Justice Minister David Lametti's bid to revive his proposal to rewrite federal drug laws to "repeal certain mandatory minimum penalties," as well as tweak the sentencing guidelines to "allow for a greater use of conditional sentences and establish diversion measures for simple drug possession offences."

An earlier iteration of the bill was introduced during the waning days of the previous parliament, but failed to make it past first reading before dying on the order paper with the mid-August election call.

Later this afternoon, the House will vote on Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole's proposed amendment to the pro forma motion to acknowledge the latest throne speech, which chides the government for failing to address soaring inflation, rising housing prices and what his party contends is the need to boost support for the Canadian energy sector, and is all but certain to be defeated.

OUTSIDE THE PRECINCT

International Trade Minister Mary Ng teams up with capital-area MPs Yasir Naqvi and Greg Fergus — who, in addition to serving as parliamentary secretary to the prime minister, also chairs the Black Parliamentary Caucus — as well as her cabinet colleague Marci Ien to outline new support for the Black Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub during an afternoon visit to the Sprott School of Business at Carleton University. (4 PM)

Region: New Brunswick ^[3]

Tags: federal agreement ^[4]

\$10aDay ^[5]

national child care ^[6]

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