

Tories amend child-care blueprint [CA] ^[1]

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Source: Toronto Star

Format: Article

Publication Date: 11 Apr 2006

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

The Conservatives agreed last night there is no reason for a decrease in anticipated early learning and child-care spaces in Canada.

The agreement led to unanimous passage in the Commons of a Liberal amendment to that effect.

The motion also said there was no reason for tax increases.

But even as it passed, Prime Minister Stephen Harper rejected calls to restore the child-care agreements negotiated by the Liberals. He said his program has targets to reach that the Liberals never had.

Opposition Leader Bill Graham challenged Harper yesterday to reinstate the five-year, \$5 billion program, citing an interview Human Resources Minister Diane Finley gave to the Toronto Star.

Finley acknowledged tax credits, such as those the Tories promised in the campaign, haven't stimulated an expansion of daycare spaces in the past, and said the government is now looking at "other incentives" and alternatives to the tax system to do so.

"The minister responsible admitted ... such tax credits fail to create child-care spaces," Graham said. "Will the Prime Minister now admit he is wrong, or does he plan to push ahead with a plan that his own minister admits will not work?"

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Harper cited support from Conservative premiers who welcomed the promised influx of cash to their provinces.

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- reprinted from the Toronto Star

Region: Canada ^[2]

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