

Hudak to cut 100,000 public sector jobs if Tories win election ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak said Friday he would reduce the number of public sector workers in Ontario by 100,000 if he wins the June 12 election to reduce the size and cost of government and help create new private sector jobs.

Hudak said eliminating the \$12.5 billion deficit by 2016 - one year ahead of the Liberals' schedule - is the best way to convince businesses to invest and create new positions, which would clear the way for his plan to create one million new jobs over eight years if he becomes premier.

"It's not easy, I take no joy in this, but it has to be done if we want job creators to put more people on the payroll in our province," Hudak told a breakfast town hall meeting in Barrie.

"If I have to trade off 100,000 jobs in the bureaucracy for one million new jobs in the private sector creating wealth, that's a tradeoff I would do any second."

Hudak said he can make a 10 per cent cut in the size of the public sector without affecting "vital" services performed by nurses, doctors and police, and save \$2 billion a year.

Campaigning in Kingston, Premier Kathleen Wynne warned voters that Hudak would have to slash government programs people need to make such deep staff cuts in the public sector.

"Tim Hudak either doesn't understand the numbers ... or he doesn't care about the services that we deliver in this province," she said. "He will have to cut services across the board, which will mean our most vulnerable people will be at risk."

The New Democrats were equally quick to condemn Hudak's plan.

"How does it make sense, when you have an economy that is struggling, when you have a lot of families already out of work, to say you are going to throw a whole bunch more families out of work," asked NDP Leader Andrea Horwath at a campaign stop in Windsor.

The Ontario Public Sector Employees Union said it wasn't convinced by Hudak's promise in February to abandon plans to make Ontario a so-called right-to-work province, and warned its 130,000 members that the PC leader was after their jobs.

"If Hudak wins a majority, it's your job that's at stake," OPSEU president Warren (Smokey) Thomas warned in a release. "It's your pension plan that's at stake."

By promising to protect only health care funding as he balances the books, Hudak becomes the first Ontario leader to say he'd cut the education budget.

"Will it mean fewer teachers? It does," Hudak said answering his own question. We'll hire more nurses, we'll keep our police officers, but it will mean fewer teachers in our system."

Hudak said it's too late to kill full-day kindergarten, the \$1.5-billion a year program that will be fully implemented across Ontario this fall, but he would change it so there's no longer both a teacher and an early childhood educator in the class at the same time.

Government is growing bigger than taxpayers can afford, said Hudak, as he vowed to eliminate agencies such as the Ontario Power Authority, Local Health Integration Networks and the College of Trades, and kill programs that "don't offer good value" such as Drive Clean, the unpopular vehicle emissions tests.

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- reprinted from Global News

Region: Ontario ^[2]

Tags: election ^[3]

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/14/05/hudak-cut-100000-public-sector-jobs-if-tories-win-election> [2] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7856> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/election>