

No taxes seen as relief

By Christina Commisso
METROLAND WEST MEDIA

In what Indira Naidoo-Harris described as a "stay-the-course" budget, the Liberals are focusing on education and health care with no tax hikes or program cuts for Ontarians.

Halton's Liberal candidate said Halton's young families will feel the benefit of the 2011 budget through the continued implementation of all-day Kindergarten and investments in health care, specifically for children's mental health services and increased breast cancer screenings.

"In many ways it's a common sense budget," said Naidoo-Harris, from a Liberal event in Mississauga, hours after the budget was announced.

"What we're looking at is no tax hikes, no tax cuts and making sure the money is flowing where it should be, like the protection of health care and education."

However, Halton's



Ted Chudleigh

Conservative MPP Ted Chudleigh said he doubts it's possible to deliver on the Liberals' promises without increasing taxes.

"Ontarians need relief from their high costs of living," he said.

"Welfare rolls are up, demand for public housing is up. Everything to do with low-income Ontarians — the demand is escalating, which tells me that things are very, very bad in Ontario."

A highlight of Tuesday's budget announcement was a



Indira Naidoo-Harris

plan to create 60,000 new student spaces at colleges and universities by 2015-16.

"There's absolutely an opportunity there for Milton Education Village," said Chudleigh.

He added the first thing he looked at in the budget was the amount allotted to provincial infrastructure.

"Our chances of the Milton hospital expansion have not been reduced today," he said. "I'm not sure if they've been improved, but they haven't been reduced."

No phony goodies

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He also voiced concerns about what the Province's focus on green energy is doing to people's hydro bills.

"A lot of our companies are small companies these days. If someone doubles or triples your electricity costs that has a huge impact on how you run your business," said Scott.

"These are big, big decisions and sometimes the current government just doesn't think long term and I think that is what Ontario needs."

Flynn said the budget investments are being funded through a growing and improving economy as opposed to on the backs of taxpayers.

He also noted that most reasonable people are recognizing this is the right budget at the right time.

"All in all, I think it's a budget that has received a good response, a measured response from the economic community, the educational community," said Flynn.

"Some of the newspapers have gone out of their way to say that it's refreshing in an election year to see a budget that's not loaded with phony election goodies."

Flynn also said he sees the opposition's comments about the budget as evidence the opposition has run out of ideas and run out of steam.



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