

Liberal forum will discuss Tory budget

The Oakville Liberal Provincial Association hosts a public forum Thursday night to allow residents to express their views about the Premier Ernie Eves' decision to announce the provincial budget outside the Legislature.

"This is a way for us to demonstrate our support for Oakville MPP and Speaker of the House Gary Carr in his critical comments about the Tory plan to

introduce the budget outside of the Ontario Legislature," said OPLA President Bruce Craig. The evening is also the last in a series of public meetings being held by Oakville Liberal candidate Kevin Flynn, whose talk that night will focus on urban sprawl, air and water quality, greenspace preservation and traffic gridlock and how it's changing the community.

This open forum and address

will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, 2774 South Sheridan Way, between Ford Drive and Winston Churchill, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Those attending are invited to bring a non-perishable food item, which will be distributed to the local food bank.

Members of the public should register their attendance by going to www.oakvilleliberal.com or calling Bruce Craig at 905-827-5286.

Premier unfazed by Carr's attacks against made-for-TV budget

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troverial actions of Eves.

Two weeks ago, Eves announced his government would release a made-for-TV budget at a private gathering rather than at Queen's Park.

The announcement was greeted by shock and anger by Opposition members and Carr.

The budget will be released tomorrow at 4 p.m. by Finance Minister Janet Ecker at a Brampton-based auto-parts business.

Finkelstein states there's "likely no judicially-enforceable constitutional law that a budget speech be delivered first" in the Legislature.

But it's tradition and should be upheld, he said.

"The real issue is whether there is a constitutional convention that a budget be delivered in the first assembly, where it can be the immediate subject of scrutiny and debate by the elected representatives of Ontarians."

"While the procedure for delivering the budget speech has varied over time, its delivery in the assembly has remained constant."

MPPs have argued they should have first crack to debate the budget the moment it's released



Barrie Erskine • Oakville Beaver

Ontario Premier Ernie Eves says he's not worried about constitutional challenges to Thursday's provincial budget.

publicly. The Eves government released its own constitutional opinion last Friday and a corporate litigation lawyer found nothing wrong with the budget presentation plan.

And on Monday, Eves defended the budget decision, insisting his government has scrupulously followed the legal process.

"I'm not worried about that at all," he told reporters at a groundbreaking for long-term care centre. "I don't see anything out of order."

He said the budget will be

filed with the House, and the media, briefed in advance, will remain under lock-down until 4 p.m., like during any other budget day.

In addition to the legal opinion, Carr had provincial clerks search for a precedent among Commonwealth countries.

Carr said Eves could eventually be found in contempt and perhaps even censured.

But it's not clear if Monday's findings are the official House rulings because Carr has refused to make comments to the media about Finkelstein's report.

The Speaker has been far from silent, though. He's publicly criticized Eves made-for-TV budget as a ploy to garner votes.

He said the Premier has thrown aside democracy to hold a budget outside the Legislature, and accused Eves of allowing a trio of political strategists to run Queen's Park by suggesting the made-for-TV budget idea.

He also warned the Premier that an arrogant government doesn't always perform well at the polls. He referred to David Peterson's decision to call an election in 1990 after only three years in power. His Liberals lost.

Eves is expected to call an election some time this year.

Oakville Tories pick candidate tonight

The Oakville Provincial Progressive Conservative Association hosts its formal nomination convention tonight (Wednesday) to select its candidate for the upcoming provincial election.

The event, which takes place

at Le Dome, 1173 North Service Rd. East, will feature contenders Andrew Pask, David Young and Kurt Franklin.

Voter registration takes place from 6 to 7 p.m. followed by opening remarks until 7:15 p.m. Speeches from the candidates

take place until 8:30 p.m. followed by the vote at 8:35 p.m.

Current Oakville MPP Gary Carr, who served at Queen's Park for 13 years and is now Speaker of the House, made it known in January that he would not seek re-election.

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