

From: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
To: [Kann, Travis \(OPO\)](#); [Watt, Heather \(MOH\)](#); [Massoudi, Amin \(OPO\)](#); [Wallace, James \(OPO\)](#); [Welton, Cody \(OPO\)](#); [Luis, Carly \(MOH\)](#)
Subject: RE: Draft Statement
Date: January 26, 2021 7:35:19 PM

Sharing a clean version with Heather's edits:

"The news about Dr. Fisman is deeply concerning. Unfortunately, we learned about this matter through the media. Neither the Premier nor his cabinet were aware of this potential conflict.

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-

We will continue to work in the best interests of all Ontarians, including parents, students, and educators. By working together, we will bend this curve, and we will put an end to this virus."

From: Kann, Travis (OPO) <Travis.Kann2@ontario.ca>
Sent: January 26, 2021 7:34 PM
To: Watt, Heather (MOH) <H.Watt@ontario.ca>; Massoudi, Amin (OPO) <Amin.Massoudi@ontario.ca>; Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>; Wallace, James (OPO) <James.Wallace@ontario.ca>; Welton, Cody (OPO) <Cody.Welton@ontario.ca>; Luis, Carly (MOH) <Carly.Luis@ontario.ca>
Subject: Re: Draft Statement

Thanks, Heather. Can you put this in front of Steini?

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From: Watt, Heather (MOH) <H.Watt@ontario.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 7:29:43 PM
To: Massoudi, Amin (OPO) <Amin.Massoudi@ontario.ca>; Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>; Wallace, James (OPO) <James.Wallace@ontario.ca>; Kann, Travis (OPO) <Travis.Kann2@ontario.ca>; Welton, Cody (OPO) <Cody.Welton@ontario.ca>; Luis, Carly (MOH) <Carly.Luis@ontario.ca>
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~~raising additional concerns about transparency.~~

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m. 647.205.4305

From: Massoudi, Amin (OPO) <Amin.Massoudi@ontario.ca>

Sent: January 26, 2021 7:06 PM

To: Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>; Wallace, James (OPO) <James.Wallace@ontario.ca>; Kann, Travis (OPO) <Travis.Kann2@ontario.ca>; Welton, Cody (OPO) <Cody.Welton@ontario.ca>; Watt, Heather (MOH) <H.Watt@ontario.ca>

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I am good with this draft.

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From: Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>

Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 7:00:36 PM

To: Wallace, James (OPO) <James.Wallace@ontario.ca>; Kann, Travis (OPO) <Travis.Kann2@ontario.ca>; Massoudi, Amin (OPO) <Amin.Massoudi@ontario.ca>; Welton, Cody (OPO) <Cody.Welton@ontario.ca>; Watt, Heather (MOH) <H.Watt@ontario.ca>

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Director of Media Relations

Office of the Premier of Ontario

C: 647-244-5201

From: [Luis, Carly \(MOH\)](#)
To: [Watt, Heather \(MOH\)](#); [Kann, Travis \(OPO\)](#); [Massoudi, Amin \(OPO\)](#); [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#); [Wallace, James \(OPO\)](#); [Welton, Cody \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: RE: Draft Statement
Date: January 26, 2021 9:05:24 PM

Hi all,

Suggested edits below based on feedback from Steini:

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Yup, happy to.

m. 647.205.4305

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Office of the Premier of Ontario

C: 647-244-5201

From: [Welton, Cody \(OPO\)](#)
To: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#); [Roberts, Andrew \(OPO\)](#); [Kann, Travis \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: FW: Dr. Richard Schabas.docx
Date: January 18, 2021 4:49:34 PM
Attachments: [Dr. Richard Schabas.docx](#)

From: Cody Welton **s. 21(1)**
Sent: January 18, 2021 4:49 PM
To: Welton, Cody (OPO) <Cody.Welton@ontario.ca>
Subject: Dr. Richard Schabas.docx

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Sent from my iPhone

Dr. Richard Schabas

Summary

- Dr. Schabas has an extensive history of claiming that lockdowns are ineffective, even after his role in the 2003 SARS pandemic.
- In favour of confining individuals with AIDS but refutes lock-downs for transmissible diseases. Uses same logic for both arguments failing to see there is a significant difference in utilizing public health measures like masks, restrictions, and lockdowns to reduce community transmission of COVID-19 in the community, and forcibly confining someone with a lifelong autoimmune disease regardless of their actions.
- Skeptical of the efficacy of annual flu shots; critical of campaigns promoting flu vaccinations
- Skeptical on the use of masks

Sources:

In a NCBI journal published in July 2004, he wrote:

"The use of quarantine in the Toronto outbreak failed on all three counts.

SARS quarantine in Toronto was both inefficient and ineffective. It was massive in scale. Toronto public health authorities quarantined approximately 100 people for each SARS case, while Beijing public health quarantined about 12 people for each SARS case. An analysis of the efficiency of quarantine in the Beijing outbreak conducted by the American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention concluded that quarantine could have been reduced by two-thirds (four people per SARS case), without compromising effectiveness if authorities had "focused only on persons who had contact with an actively ill SARS patient" (2).

[...]

Did quarantine work for SARS? Notwithstanding the conclusions of the Toronto public health group, I think the evidence is now overwhelming that quarantine played little or no role in controlling SARS. Furthermore, mass quarantine, as practiced in Toronto, did considerable harm by sapping public health resources and fueling public anxiety.

SARS was rapidly controlled and eradicated in Toronto and everywhere else that it appeared. Fundamentally, this is because SARS is only capable of sustained transmission in hospitals that do not suspect its presence. SARS is not capable of sustained transmission in the community (6). Case identification and isolation in hospitals is what controlled SARS. Quarantine, as such, played no role.

In the unlikely event of another SARS outbreak in Canada, public health officials should quarantine no one."

Source via NCBI: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2094974/>

Dr. Schabas debates the importance of getting a flu shot and says that the vaccine is not very effective in preventing the flu. He also debates the number of published deaths that result from influenza every year, and that the only ones that pass away are the very old and very infirm. Says that public health, media, and pharmaceutical industries are overselling flu vaccines. States there is new research that getting the flu shot every year may provide less protection than getting it at a more infrequent interval, so mass campaigns to vaccinate may not be the best approach.

Source via CBC: <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2650948000>

Dr. Schabas spoke at the House of Commons Standing Committee of Health in May 2020, stating that death is a common phenomenon in the world, and that public health and media have frightened the public in regards to COVID-19.

"Canada is now faced with both a tragedy and a crisis. The tragedy is caused by COVID, a respiratory virus. It has the potential to cause the deaths of tens of thousands of Canadians, overwhelmingly old and infirm.

The crisis is caused by our attempts to control that virus. The crisis has the potential to cause severe and lasting damage to the fabric of our country's economy, education, social and cultural institutions, and mental health that will have repercussions for our public health for decades.

The tragedy is a natural disaster that saddens me and saddens us all. The crisis is a self-inflicted wound that frankly terrifies me. It offends social justice, because the burden of the crisis falls disproportionately on children, young families and blue-collar workers. The more we focus exclusively on COVID, the greater the danger to our public health.

Perspective isn't very popular with COVID, but I think it's important. We get spooked by COVID deaths because every day we see the numbers for COVID, but not for anything else. Death is a common phenomenon in our world. Almost 300,000 Canadians will die this year, like every year, from cancer, heart disease, stroke, motor vehicle crashes, suicide and a myriad of other causes. Since mid-March, for every Canadian outside long-term care who has died of COVID, 50 Canadians have died of something else.

We have frightened people. Predictably, the media has led the way. But public health has also frightened people, I think, to promote better compliance with social distancing. This was wrong for two reasons: first, it's cynical; and second, it now will make it that much harder to step down."

Dr. Fisman responds:

"The fact that Spain is at 5% prevalence 30,000 deaths in, with an infection fatality rate of 1%, makes me very concerned about some of Dr. Schabas's remarks in terms of moving towards herd immunity. We think that we'd hit herd immunity at 60% to 70% of Canadians infected. Seventy per cent of Canadians infected is 28 million people, and 1% of that is 280,000 Canadians dead. I would note that the failure to have mass mortality in Canada to date relates to the public health response."

Source via: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/43-1/HESA/meeting-22/evidence>

Interviewed by Toronto Caribbean on October 14, 2020, saying that COVID-19 is not quite the global catastrophe that it has been brought up to be.

Says lockdown is unnecessary, destructive, and leads us nowhere – that death rates have gone down significantly because more young people are getting this. Goes on to say that this is an overreaction to a threat that has been overstated. Says ICUs in the spring were 80% empty, says issues that were faced in Italy and New York will not be an issue in Ontario.

Skeptical about mask usage, says despite everyone using masks now, rates of COVID are rising. Says there is some “weak evidence” supporting masks, but evidence is insufficient.

Says COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that cannot be stopped, instead we should focus on mitigation and better protecting the elderly in care homes, and that now other people should “suck it up and move along with their lives.” Says public health authorities have done “so much fear mongering to try to get young people to be compliant with lockdown and they have exaggerated the risk to young people.” Says that people need to make their own decisions about their own level of risks.

Source via: <https://torontocaribbean.com/drschabas/>

- Dr. Schabas seems to fail to understand that the entire purpose of public health measures are not to “scare” people, but to help the public understand that everyone plays a role in transmission. While one individual may be healthy, the people that they unknowingly pass the virus onto may not be, and the health impacts they face could be fatal.

Wrote an article in the Globe and Mail on March 11, 2020 titled, “Strictly by the numbers, the coronavirus does not register as a dire global crisis.” Dr. Schabas states:

“In the three months or so since it started, the new coronavirus and its related COVID-19 disease – which emerged in the Chinese province of Hubei late in 2019 and now numbers more than 110,000 cases around the world – have caused more than 4,000 deaths, mostly in China. As the case numbers grow around the world, including in Canada, where there are now more than 70 cases, people have become concerned that a pandemic is inevitable.

But in the same three months, there have been about three million deaths in China from other causes, and about 14 million deaths worldwide. During the same three-month period, according to Health Canada, there have been almost 10,000 deaths in Canada from tobacco addiction, for instance – and just one from COVID-19.

Is COVID-19 a global crisis? Certainly for people who can’t add.”

Mentioned in a CMAJ article titled “Pandemic threat overblown by both experts and media,” where Dr. Schabas states:

The current threat of pandemic posed by the H5N1 avian flu is a “fraud,” Ontario's former chief medical officer of health (1987–97) told 186 public health and media professionals at a Toronto conference on June 27. “I am more frightened by the traffic I had to fight to get here than I am by the threat of bird flu,” said Dr. Richard Schabas.

Source via: <https://www.cmaj.ca/content/175/4/341>

Mentioned on the AIDS Activist History Project website regarding HIV/AIDS quarantine law propositions throughout Canada:

HIV quarantine laws had been discussed and proposed provincially across Canada, including the 1990 proposal by Ontario's then Chief Medical Officer of Health Richard Schabas to classify HIV as a virulent disease and therefore legitimizing the use of quarantine of sexually active HIV+ people.[3] The first criminal prosecutions for HIV exposure began in 1989, paving the way for Canada's present day sordid reputation for being a world leader in criminal prosecutions for HIV non-disclosure per capita.[4]

Source via: <https://aidsactivisthistory.ca/features/person-livid-with-aids-1990/>

Toronto Star article published in 1990 describes outrage regarding Dr. Schabas' commentary regarding AIDS quarantine:

“Anyone infected with the AIDS virus who contrinues to have intercourse could be forcibly confined under a new public health proposal – even if a condom is used and the person warns his or her sex partner of the risk.

The proposal by Dr. Richard Schabas, Ontario's chief medical officer of health, has drawn howls of protest from AIDS activists who say it misleads the public about the dangers of the disease and could force the province to lock up thousands of people.”

[...] Schabas defended the proposal yesterday, saying **it is an appropriate public health measure to prevent the spread of disease.**

“The risk of intercourse with someone who is infected even when a condom is used, is known to be too high,” he said in a phone interview. Those who have intercourse with infected people **are taking their lives in their hands.**

[...] Schabas has recommended to Health Minister Elinor Caplan that she reclassify AIDS as a ‘virulent’ disease under provincial law, allowing public health officials to ask the courts to confine carriers to hospital if they are exposing others to the virus.

Most people had assumed that Schabas hoped to confine only those few carriers who continue to have unprotected se with partners who have no idea the person is infected.

But Schabas said yesterday that public health orders should be issued to anyone infected with the virus who continues to have any form of sexual intercourse.

Source via: <https://aidsactivisthistory.omeka.net/items/show/20>

From: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
To: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
Bcc: [Charlene.Close@rci.rogers.com](#); [Natalie.Johnson@bellmedia.ca](#); [News.Centre@bellmedia.ca](#); [tahwee.teo@epochtimes.com](#); [Sean.Grech@bellmedia.ca](#); [Ivy.Mak@bellmedia.ca](#); [Joel.Bowey@bellmedia.ca](#); [CTVTOAssignment@bellmedia.ca](#); [cp24producers@cp24.com](#); [Toronto.Digital.Group@bellmedia.ca](#); [Glynn.Perkins@bellmedia.ca](#); [libby@zoomer.ca](#); [z.haddi@mzmedia.com](#); [c.ross@mzmedia.com](#); [j.brown@mzmedia.com](#); [b.komsic@mzmedia.com](#); [j.logan@mzmedia.com](#); [g.day@mzmedia.com](#); [dbalji1@bloomberg.net](#); [ddecloet@bloomberg.net](#); [dbochove1@bloomberg.net](#); [GLayson@crain.onmicrosoft.com](#); [targitis@bloomberg.net](#); [shagan9@bloomberg.net](#); [erschmitzhert@bloomberg.net](#); [swicary@bloomberg.net](#); [ottawanews@bloomberg.net](#); [allysha.howse@narcity.com](#); [Allison.Martell@thomsonreuters.com](#); [bhunter@postmedia.com](#); [melissa.schultz@bellmedia.ca](#); [Kris.Pangilinan@bellmedia.ca](#); [yannick.jacques@radio-canada.ca](#); [Ian.Caldwell@bellmedia.ca](#); [Tracy.Brooks@bellmedia.ca](#); [Kavan.Lee@bellmedia.ca](#); [sabrina.jonas@cbc.ca](#); [Glynn.Perkins@bellmedia.ca](#); [Irene.Preklet@rci.rogers.com](#); [colin.dmello@bellmedia.ca](#); [cynthia.mulligan@citynews.rogers.com](#); [rath@chch.com](#); [travis.dhanraj@globalnews.ca](#); [cristina.tenaglia@bellmedia.ca](#); [arda.zakarian@bellmedia.ca](#); [jamie.gutfreund@bellmedia.ca](#); [mike.crawley@cbc.ca](#); [meagan.fitzpatrick@cbc.ca](#); [rbenzie@thestar.ca](#); [krushowy@thestar.ca](#); [rferguson@thestar.ca](#); [mcohn@thestar.ca](#); [aartuso@postmedia.com](#); [brian.jameslilley@gmail.com](#); [cselley@nationalpost.com](#); [lstone@globeandmail.com](#); [jgray@globeandmail.com](#); [editorial@queensparktoday.ca](#); [sabrina@queensparktoday.ca](#); [jscross@torstar.ca](#); [dhains@qpbriefing.com](#); [sduggal@torstar.ca](#); [jhauen@qpbriefing.com](#); [emma.paling@huffpost.com](#); [richard.southern@rci.rogers.com](#); [lucas.meyer@bellmedia.ca](#); [hayley.cooper@bellmedia.ca](#); [ashley.legassic@bellmedia.ca](#); [jmcgrath@tvo.org](#); [spaikin@tvo.org](#); [torontodesk@ctv.ca](#); [Mathieu.simard@radio-canada.ca](#); [natasha.macdonald-dupuis@radio-canada.ca](#); [jainsherriffscott@ipolitics.ca](#); [Stephanie.Smyth@bellmedia.ca](#); [epelletier@ledroit.com](#); [lorenda.reddekopp@cbc.ca](#); [paola.loriggio@thecanadianpress.com](#); [Kamil.Karamali@globalnews.ca](#); [Shawn.Jeffords@thecanadianpress.com](#); [holly.mckenzie-sutter@thecanadianpress.com](#); [philippe.de.montigny@radio-canada.ca](#); [carly.thomas@cbc.ca](#); [stephen.hoff@cbc.ca](#); [Diana.Pereira@rci.rogers.com](#); [james.tumelty@citytv.rogers.com](#); [David.Boorne@rci.rogers.com](#); [RMIcityNewsToNewsDsk@rci.rogers.com](#); [CP24Assignment@bellmedia.ca](#); [ashley.stanhope@globalnews.ca](#); [Joe.Olafson@bellmedia.ca](#); [sean.davidson@bellmedia.ca](#); [Chris.Fox@bellmedia.ca](#); [russ.courtney@bellmedia.ca](#); [kmsener@rci.rogers.com](#); [Cristina.Howorun@citytv.rogers.com](#); [lisa-marie.fleurent@radio-canada.ca](#); [pierre-mathieu.tremblay@cbc.ca](#); [michel.bolduc@radio-canada.ca](#); [Gabby.Rodrigues@globalnews.ca](#); [Simon.Ostler@globalnews.ca](#); [Samantha.Berdini@globalnews.ca](#); [Shallima.Maharaj@globalnews.ca](#); [Suzette.Francis@globalnews.ca](#); [Laura.Carney@rci.rogers.com](#); [Adamo, Alexandra \(OPO\)](#); [Wood, Christine \(OPO\)](#); [Kann, Travis \(OPO\)](#); [Welton, Cody \(OPO\)](#); [Luis, Carly \(MOH\)](#); [Hilkene, Alexandra \(MOH\)](#); [Furey, Anthony; Clark, Caitlin \(EDU\)](#)
Subject: Statement from the Office of Premier Doug Ford
Date: January 26, 2021 9:17:00 PM

Statement from the Office of Premier Doug Ford

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Office of the Premier of Ontario

C: 647-244-5201

From: [Alanna Rizza](#)
To: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: Dr Fisman - Global News inquiry
Date: January 26, 2021 9:24:25 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.jpg](#)

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Hi Ivana,

Hoping to get comment regarding a [report](#) that Dr. Fisman, a member of the Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table, was paid by a teachers' union to argue against the government's school reopening plans.

Thank you,

Alanna Rizza | Assignment Coordinator
Global News Toronto | Corus Entertainment
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From: [D'Mello, Colin](#)
To: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#); [Kann, Travis \(MOH\)](#)
Subject: FISMAN
Date: January 26, 2021 5:28:00 PM

CAUTION -- EXTERNAL E-MAIL - Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Hello!

Dr. Fisman has publicly acknowledged that he accepted payment from ETFO to argue against the school re-opening plan, while also serving as one of the members of the COVID-19 science table.

While Dr. Fisman says he disclosed the conflict, he says he also offered his resignation to the chair, but that was not accepted by the chair and he remains on the science table.

Looking for a comment on whether the Premier's office wishes for Dr. Fisman to continue serving as an advisor to the government on the science table in light of the payment from ETFO.

Also does he receive a salary from the province for serving on the science table?

Thanks!
Colin

From: [Watt, Heather \(MOH\)](#)
To: [Kann, Travis \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: Fwd: Statement on Furey Article
Date: January 26, 2021 8:51:06 PM

Carly is tweaking a bit and will send back around.

Heather Watt
Chief of Staff, Hon. Christine Elliott
647.205.4305

From: Adalsteinn Brown <adalsteinn.brown@utoronto.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 20:28
To: Watt, Heather (MOH)
Subject: Re: Statement on Furey Article

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Thanks Heather

s. 13

[Redacted content]

I can live with the language if you need to put that out there.

Best

From: Watt, Heather (MOH) <H.Watt@ontario.ca>
Date: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 7:50 PM

To: Adalsteinn Brown <adalsteinn.brown@utoronto.ca>

Subject: Re: Statement on Furey Article

EXTERNAL EMAIL:

s. 13

Open to suggestions on language -

Heather Watt
Chief of Staff, Hon. Christine Elliott
647.205.4305

From: Adalsteinn Brown <adalsteinn.brown@utoronto.ca>

Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 19:43

To: Watt, Heather (MOH)

Subject: Re: Statement on Furey Article

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Thanks Heather

What does the expression "sought a resolution to ensure clear conflict of interest screens are in place" mean?" I think all of the rest makes sense to me, but that phrase worries me a lot.

Best

Steini

From: Watt, Heather (MOH) <H.Watt@ontario.ca>

Date: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 at 7:40 PM

To: Adalsteinn Brown <adalsteinn.brown@utoronto.ca>

Subject: Statement on Furey Article

EXTERNAL EMAIL:

Hi Steini,

Thanks for taking my call earlier. We are being asked by media to respond, but I think we have found a reasonable landing position that addresses the issue.

Can you let me know if you have any major concerns with this statement?

Thanks,
Heather

**

“The news about Dr. Fisman is deeply concerning. Unfortunately, we learned about this matter through the media. Neither the Premier nor his cabinet were aware of this potential conflict.

Ontarians have put their trust in us to make difficult decisions based on sound, impartial public health advice. Our expectation is that anyone advising the government in this capacity would do so absent of agenda or bias, and therefore this paid relationship raises legitimate concerns.

While the COVID-19 Science Advisory Table is an independent voluntary group of experts that advises the government on matters of critical importance, we have sought a resolution to ensure clear conflict of interest screens are in place.

The overwhelming evidence shows our government’s return to school plan is safe. This has been confirmed by a wide range of public health officials, including members of the COVID-19 Science Advisory Table.

We will continue to work in the best interests of all Ontarians, including parents, students, and educators. By working together, we will bend this curve, and we will put an end to this virus.”

Heather Watt
Chief of Staff
Hon. Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier & Minister of Health

m. 647.205.4305

From: [Adamo, Alexandra \(OPO\)](#)
To: [Klimuntowski, Michael \(OPO\)](#)
Cc: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: RE: expert reports
Date: January 26, 2021 5:19:14 PM
Attachments: [s. 65\(6\) applies to entire attachment](#)

Here is the summary EDU prepared at the time.

Alexandra Adamo
Press Secretary
Office of the Premier of Ontario
[s. 14](#)

From: Adamo, Alexandra (OPO)
Sent: January 26, 2021 5:17 PM
To: Klimuntowski, Michael (OPO) <Michael.Klimuntowski@ontario.ca>
Cc: Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>
Subject: expert reports

Press release:
<https://www.elfo.ca/AboutETF/O/MediaRoom/MediaReleases/Pages/Experts%20share%20their%20views%20on%20province%E2%80%99s%20flawed%20return%20to%20school%20plan.aspx>

Fisman report: http://www.catholicteachers.ca/OECTA/media/pdfs/News/2020/oct/NR_2020-18-davidFisman.pdf

I am trying to find the other expert reports (another prominent doctor who has a social media presence as well) but here you go.

Alexandra Adamo
Press Secretary
Office of the Premier of Ontario
[s. 14](#)

From: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
To: [Furey, Anthony](#)
Subject: RE: Postmedia request
Date: January 26, 2021 9:08:00 PM

Hey Furey,

Statement below can be attributed to the Office of Premier Doug Ford:

“The news about Dr. Fisman is deeply concerning. Unfortunately, we learned about this matter through the media. Neither the Premier nor his cabinet were aware of this potential conflict.

Ontarians have put their trust in us to make difficult decisions based on sound, impartial public health advice. Our expectation is that anyone involved in providing advice to the government in this capacity would do so absent of agenda or bias, and therefore this paid relationship raises legitimate concerns.

While the COVID-19 Science Advisory Table is an independent voluntary group of experts that provides advice to the government on matters of critical importance, it is our expectation that all individuals act in good faith and disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

The overwhelming evidence shows our government’s return to school plan is safe. This has been confirmed by a wide range of public health experts.

We will continue to work in the best interests of all Ontarians, including parents, students, and educators. By working together, we will bend this curve, and we will put an end to this virus.”

Thanks,

Ivana Yelich
Director of Media Relations
Office of the Premier of Ontario
C: 647-244-5201

From: Furey, Anthony <AFurey@postmedia.com>
Sent: January 26, 2021 6:30 PM
To: Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>
Subject: Postmedia request

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Hi Ivana - Does the Premier's Office have any response to the news that Science Table member David Fisman was retained by the ETFO to argue against the MoE reopening plans, which experts say may constitute a conflict of interest?

Thank you

-Anthony

From: [Sabrina Nanji](#)
To: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: Re: Statement from the Office of Premier Doug Ford
Date: January 26, 2021 9:28:31 PM

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Just following up — are there any other conflicts disclosed on any of the advisory tables that the public should be aware about, and what are they? Is the government now going to review all other disclosures? Thanks!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 26, 2021, at 9:17 PM, Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca> wrote:

Statement from the Office of Premier Doug Ford

-

"The news about Dr. Fisman is deeply concerning. Unfortunately, we learned about this matter through the media. Neither the Premier nor his cabinet were aware of this potential conflict.

Ontarians have put their trust in us to make difficult decisions based on sound, impartial public health advice. Our expectation is that anyone involved in providing advice to the government in this capacity would do so absent of agenda or bias, and therefore this paid relationship raises legitimate concerns.

While the COVID-19 Science Advisory Table is an independent voluntary group of experts that provides advice to the government on matters of critical importance, it is our expectation that all individuals act in good faith and disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

The overwhelming evidence shows our government's return to school plan is safe. This has been confirmed by a wide range of public health experts.

We will continue to work in the best interests of all Ontarians, including parents, students, and educators. By working together, we will bend this curve, and we will put an end to this virus."

-30-

Ivana Yelich
Director of Media Relations
Office of the Premier of Ontario
C: 647-244-5201

From: [News - Oshawa](#)
To: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: Dr Fisman
Date: January 27, 2021 8:01:03 AM

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Hi Ivana,

Can we get the Premier's statement on Dr. Fisman's relationship with ETFO please?

Thanks,

Craig Smith

Durham Radio News

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From: [Roberts, Andrew \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: Issues of the Day - January 27, 2021
Date: January 27, 2021 9:27:04 AM

Issues of the Day - January 27, 2021

N/R



N/R

N/R

Issue: Dr. David Fisman

- The news about Dr. Fisman is deeply concerning. Unfortunately, we learned about this matter through the media. Neither the Premier nor his cabinet were aware of this potential conflict.
- Ontarians have put their trust in us to make difficult decisions based on sound, impartial public health advice.
- Our expectation is that anyone involved in providing advice to the government in this capacity would do so absent of agenda or bias, and therefore this paid relationship raises legitimate concerns.
- While the COVID-19 Science Advisory Table is an independent voluntary group of experts that provides advice to the government on matters of critical importance, it is our expectation that all individuals act in good faith and disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest.
- The overwhelming evidence shows our government's return to school plan is safe. This has been confirmed by a wide range of public health experts.
- We will continue to work in the best interests of all Ontarians, including parents, students, and educators. By working together, we will bend this curve, and we will put an end to this virus.

N/R



From: [Saunders, Justin \(EDU\)](#)
To: [Rasalingham, Rowan \(OPO\)](#)
Cc: [@OPO-PO-issues](#); [Landau, Josh \(EDU\)](#); [Gallagher, Catherine \(EDU\)](#)
Subject: RE: EDU - Jan 27
Date: January 27, 2021 6:59:28 AM

N/R



N/R

The Toronto Sun and Ottawa Sun are reporting that Dr. David Fisman, a prominent member of Ontario's Science Table was paid by a teachers union for offering a plan against the government's school reopening plan, creating a conflict of interest.

Justin Saunders | Issues Manager
Office of the Minister of Education
Justin.saunders@ontario.ca
647-296-3924

From: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
To: [Bharti, Bianca](#)
Subject: RE: National Post request for quick comment
Date: January 27, 2021 8:13:00 AM

Hello Bianca. Statement below. As mentioned in the statement, the Table is an independent body so I would reach out to the chairs—they're best suited to answer your other questions.

Statement from the Office of Premier Doug Ford

-

"The news about Dr. Fisman is deeply concerning. Unfortunately, we learned about this matter through the media. Neither the Premier nor his cabinet were aware of this potential conflict.

Ontarians have put their trust in us to make difficult decisions based on sound, impartial public health advice. Our expectation is that anyone involved in providing advice to the government in this capacity would do so absent of agenda or bias, and therefore this paid relationship raises legitimate concerns.

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-30-

Ivana Yelich
Director of Media Relations
Office of the Premier of Ontario
C: 647-244-5201

From: Bharti, Bianca <bbharti@postmedia.com>
Sent: January 27, 2021 8:09 AM
To: Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>
Subject: National Post request for quick comment

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Hi Ivana,

Hope your morning is going well.

Is it possible to get a quick statement from Premier Ford about Dr. Fisman's connection to the teachers' union?

Had Fisman disclosed his affiliations with the teacher's union? How long has he been on the advisory table? And just wanted to confirm what date the advisory table was set up?

I have a 10 a.m. deadline.

Thank you so much for your time,

Bianca

From: [Welton, Cody \(OPO\)](#)
To: [Roberts, Andrew \(OPO\)](#); [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#); [Kann, Travis \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: FW: Tweets by Deputy Chief of Staff Cody Matthew Welton and **s. 21(1)** - Stop disparaging our COVID-19 experts
Date: January 28, 2021 12:15:09 PM

From: **s. 21(1)**

Sent: January 28, 2021 11:37 AM

To: doug.fordco@pc.ola.org; Welton, Cody (OPO) <Cody.Welton@ontario.ca>;
s. 21(1)

Cc: stephen.lecce@pc.ola.org; Bennett, Jerome (OPO) <Jerome.Bennett@ontario.ca>; Oliviero, Carlo (OPO) <Carlo.Oliviero2@ontario.ca>; Vanstone, Lyndsey (OPO) <Lyndsey.Vanstone@ontario.ca>; Pavlovic, Nina (OPO) <Nina.Pavlovic@ontario.ca>; Dinno, Carol (OPO) <Carol.Dinno@ontario.ca>; Glover-CO, Chris <CGlover-CO@ndp.on.ca>; Mallette, Cody (OPO) <Cody.Mallette2@ontario.ca>; Daniels, Simone (OPO) <Simone.Daniels@ontario.ca>; Massoudi, Amin (OPO) <Amin.Massoudi@ontario.ca>; Miles, Dan (OPO) <Dan.Miles2@ontario.ca>; Bendayan, Jenna (OPO) <Jenna.Bendayan2@ontario.ca>; apicard@globeandmail.com; afurey@postmedia.com; breakingnews@cp24.com; kari.vierimaa@cbc.ca; brian.topp@gtandcompany.ca; don.guy@gtandcompany.ca

Subject: Tweets by **N/R** and **s. 21(1)** - Stop disparaging our COVID-19 experts

CAUTION -- EXTERNAL E-MAIL - Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Dear Mr Ford, **N/R** and **s. 21(1)**,

I'm writing as a member of the general public to express my dismay at the disparaging of our COVID-19 experts this week by the Ontario Government, **N/R**

I can't begin to express how awful it is to witness the government taking down rather than listening to our COVID-19 experts, such as **N/R** and Dr Fisman, at this time. We are going down a very dark road if this continues and amends are not made for this behaviour.

I would also note that it has not gone unnoticed that **s. 21(1)** tweeted a response to this Sun article before it was published, which leaves the public asking whether the government is trying to undermine COVID-19 experts. <https://torontosun.com/news/provincial/ontarios-science-table-head-reveals-david-fisman-conflict-of-interest-timing>

It seems completely lost on **N/R** and **s. 21(1)** how well-respected these physicians

are. As a member of the general public, I would appreciate a reply from N/R and s. 21(1) on the actions they are taking to rectify the harms of their actions, including undermining public confidence in health experts as well as the government. It seems a public apology to these physicians is a starting point.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

s. 21(1)

N/R

From: [Gray, Jeff](#)
To: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: RE: Hi Ivana, couple of questions today
Date: January 28, 2021 4:49:07 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

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That's what I thought! Thanks!

Jeff

From: Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>
Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2021 4:47 PM
To: Gray, Jeff <JGray@globeandmail.com>
Subject: RE: Hi Ivana, couple of questions today

****This email originated outside of The Globe and Mail****

My apologies, that should say "testing capacity".

Ivana Yelich
Director of Media Relations
Office of the Premier of Ontario
C: 647-244-5201

From: Gray, Jeff <JGray@globeandmail.com>
Sent: January 28, 2021 4:46 PM
To: Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>
Subject: RE: Hi Ivana, couple of questions today

CAUTION -- EXTERNAL E-MAIL - Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

One question. When you say "increasing capacity" did you mean testing capacity? Or ICU capacity?
Or capacity inside long-term care?

Thanks,
Jeff

From: Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>
Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2021 2:52 PM
To: Gray, Jeff <JGray@globeandmail.com>
Subject: RE: Hi Ivana, couple of questions today

****This email originated outside of The Globe and Mail****

Sorry about that! My computer went a little wonky there. Statement below can be attributed to me.

"We have never heard of this individual and the allegation he is making is categorically false.

We have never threatened funding cuts because of criticism. In fact, we have never shied away from tough feedback.

Whether it's increasing capacity or improving the quality of care in our long-term care homes, it's the tough feedback that has pushed us to be better and has made Team Ontario stronger in our fight against COVID-19."

On background: there is no tougher critic than Dr. Fisman and he still sits on the province's science and modelling tables. Our concern was never his criticism of our government, it was his lack of timely disclosure of a perceived conflict of interest.

Thanks,

Ivana Yelich
Director of Media Relations
Office of the Premier of Ontario
C: 647-244-5201

From: Gray, Jeff <JGray@globeandmail.com>
Sent: January 28, 2021 2:07 PM
To: Yelich, Ivana (OPO) <Ivana.Yelich@ontario.ca>
Subject: Hi Ivana, couple of questions today

CAUTION -- EXTERNAL E-MAIL - Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender.

Hi Ivana,

Hope you are doing well. I have a couple of questions that we need to put to you today. Our deadline is 5 p.m.

1. Can I get a response to the allegations from Osler ICU doctor Brooks Fallis that he was told that he was relieved of his duties as interim director of critical care there because his hospital fears his outspokenness on the shortcomings of the province's pandemic response could jeopardize its government funding?
2. We are hearing from some doctors about pressure from hospital administrators to stop criticizing the government's pandemic response. One claims they were told that a ministry official, and a "political operative," told hospital leadership to shush outspoken doctors. Has the Premier, or the Minister of Health, or their senior staff, ever told hospital leaders that they could face funding cuts if they don't silence outspoken doctor critics? Or complained about comments from doctors in any way?

Thanks,
Jeff

Cell 416-579-5261



Jeff Gray | Queen's Park reporter

Press Gallery, Queen's Park, Rm. 374

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www.globeandmail.com/authors/jeff-gray/

From: [Yelich, Ivana \(OPO\)](#)
To: [Kann, Travis \(OPO\)](#); [Welton, Cody \(OPO\)](#)
Subject: Transcript: CFRB - Pundit Jim Warren on Doctor Controversy (Jan 28)
Date: January 28, 2021 7:33:03 AM

CFRB/Newstalk 1010: I was saying it was Bruce McArthur who wrote a column today in the Star, but serial killers don't do columns. Bruce Arthur, writing today about three prominent critics of Doug Ford going down one-two-three, being taken out with social media or newspaper columns all affiliated with the Sun chain. And now, there's another doctor who says he lost his job because the Premier was unhappy. I certainly can confirm that Dr. Warner at Michael Garron Hospital told Jim Richards that the Premier had actually called his supervisors to complain about him. So, does it seem there's a pattern of doctors being attacked by our government, sometimes covertly, because they dare to question the COVID measures?

Jim Warren, Newstalk 1010 Pundit: Well, he may not be a serial killer, but the article seems like a drive-by shooting to me. You know, it's... I think some of these comments are, you know, are quite outlandish, and I think I'd be very upset if I worked in the Premier's office today. I mean, first of all, the biggest one they're talking about here is the Doctor Fisman. And so, you know, John, when I come on this radio and if you ask me about The Beer Store, you ask me something about beer? The first thing I tell you is 'I work for The Beer Store, and I do work for them and they pay me, but let me tell you what my opinion on this is.' I go out of my way to do this. And so, in this instance, Dr. Fisman was paid by this teachers' union and then he advised the government on what to do about school reopening. And I think the onus is on him for every time he was ever asked his opinion, he should have qualified it by saying, 'look, I do work for the school-- or I was hired by the union, but this is what my opinion is.' And so, having these conflicts aren't a problem unless you're transparent about them. And so, you know, if the Premier's office is doing this, they will get caught. There will be actual proof. But, until you find some proof, I think it's very difficult in this situation, in these times when we need everyone to work together, to make these allegations. And, the other quick thing I'm going to say is, doctors on Twitter make this very personal. You know, when I tell my clients to advocate for change with the government, you say 'I want the Ontario government to do this' or 'I want the Ontario government to make this change.' Everything on Twitter that the doctors are doing, they make it very personal and it's very hard-- you know, it's always the-- Ford does this, Ford does that. It's always Ford, Ford, Ford. When you make these things personal, the person listening, the person you want to make the actual change, when you attack them personally, it doesn't get you anywhere. Then, this becomes a conflict and we all want to make sure everyone's safe. Everyone has the same goals. The doctors need to make it less personal and make it more policy-driven.