

Hansard October 2, 2013
GO Transit

Mr. Frank Klees: My question is to the Minister of Infrastructure. I want to ask about yet another questionable, if not fraudulent, activity at another one of the government agencies. This time it involves GO Transit in its dealings with CN Rail.

In a confidential email to five of his colleagues, Mr. Darryl Barnett, who was CN's divisional manager for Ontario at the time set out in great detail how CN would recover some \$385,000 of CN's over-expenditures from GO Transit. The plan included measures such as using partially worn tie plates and padding invoices. In the end, the email reads "Total exposure: Reduced from \$385 to \$78k."

My question to the Premier is this: Who at GO Transit was complicit with this scheme to fund taxpayer infrastructure dollars to CN to fund its—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Stop the clock.

I remind the member that he directed his question in his preamble to the Minister of Infrastructure, not the Premier.

Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I think CN, and I hope the member opposite—this is the second time we've heard these allegations. CN has put out a comprehensive report, as I understand, denying all of this and giving evidence. I will further—

Interjections.

L067-1130-02 ends

L067-1135-02 begins

(Hon. Mr. Murray)

—these allegations. CN has put out a comprehensive report, as I understand, denying all of this and giving evidence. I will further—

Interjections.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Did you read it?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Mr. Speaker, we will—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Halton will withdraw.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Really? Really? Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope the member has done his homework. I will certainly look at it.

I want to say one thing, Mr. Speaker, though, about that. This is the party that loves to trash GO Transit. Today, as you probably know, Mr. Speaker, GO Transit won the American Public Transportation Association—of which they are a member. This is the US best service award for the best large public transportation system in North America. ??A Canadian—

Interjections.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: ?? in North America, a Canadian—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Supplementary?

Mr. Frank Klees: Speaker, that's the same defensive rhetoric I heard from the Minister of Health when we first asked questions about Ornge in this place.

The email to which I'm referring from Mr. Barnett said this, "We have run into some unexpected over expenditures to date and I would like to establish a strategy to mitigate or get out of as many as possible"—a strategy, Speaker, that I find it difficult to believe that people at GO Transit were not part of.

Would it surprise the minister to know that the same Daryl Barnett, who was the architect of that strategy left as division engineer at CN in 2008 and within days was hired by GO Transit and today that same individual is director of railway corridor infrastructure for GO Transit?

I would like to ask the minister this—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question.

Mr. Frank Klees: Will he defend what went on there or will he do what is right, order an investigation into what is going on at GO Transit and between GO Transit and CN and ensure that every step is taken to ensure—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You're not helping.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member opposite may know, we just went through an investigation where similar allegations were raised with CN. They turned out, after an extensive investigation—

Interjection.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Mr. Speaker, they turned out, after a very thorough investigation, that there was no validity to it, that the deals between CN and GO were not only aboveboard but very valid and very fair.

Mr. Speaker, if the member has any evidence at all, then he should table it with me and the ministry. As you know from earlier conversations today, we have no fear of opening up an investigation at all. We just completed one. We are not shy about transparency, and my Premier makes sure that I and every other minister aren't afraid. She supports us in inquiries as we found out with the release today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I have no fear of—

Mr. Frank Klees: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Newmarket–Aurora on a point of order.

Mr. Frank Klees: Further to the minister's offer: We don't trust him, but we do want the Auditor General—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's not a point of order. I—