



FRANK KLEES, M.P.P.
Newmarket-Aurora

Tuesday, January 14, 2014

The Hon. Deb Mathews,
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care,
10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2C4

Dear Minister,

I read with interest your response to the January 2nd incident in which Ornge was not able to respond to an emergency call to transport a seriously injured patient to a Toronto hospital. I am concerned that once again, rather than holding Ornge accountable, you are defending what can only be described as a failure to meet its mandate to provide timely and reliable emergency response services to the people of Ontario.

You stated that "Ornge works with dispatch, caregivers and local EMS to ensure that the patient gets the care they need." Clearly, that was not the case on January 2nd when 5 year old Celeste Arthur was denied timely emergency transport and treatment for her injuries.

I would ask that you provide answers to the following questions:

- 1) When it was discovered that Ornge could not transport the patient to a Toronto hospital, why was the decision made to transport her by land ambulance rather than dispatch an alternative air ambulance carrier under contract to Ornge?
- 2) Will you agree to make public the Availability Report that confirms which alternative air ambulance carriers under contract to Ornge were available to respond to Ornge dispatch to provide the air transport for Celeste.

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- 3) Were you aware that a cost-cutting directive was recently issued that directs Ornge dispatch to use Ornge facilities for the majority of calls instead of the fixed wing carriers under contract to Ornge?
- 4) If you were aware of this directive, how can you as Minister of Health justify putting patients at risk knowing that resources that are available to provide air ambulance transport are not being utilized in favour of cutting costs ?
- 5) If you were not aware of this directive, why not and will you agree to immediately direct Ornge to rescind that directive in the interest of patient safety?

I agree with my colleague, Ms. Gelinas that it is inexcusable that this family was left to wonder why the air ambulance transfer that they were told Celeste desperately needed never happened.

What concerns me greatly, is that you as Minister continue to accept the excuses for Ornge incompetency and continue to put patients at risk, rather than take the necessary steps to ensure that Ontarians can count on essential emergency services when they are needed.



Frank Klees, MPP

cc: Hon. Kathleen Wynne, MPP, Premier of Ontario