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ONTARIO ELECTION 2022

CLIMATE CRIME #4

Ford's electric vehicle scheme: Driving in reverse

Ontario's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions is the transportation sector. So, making a significant dent in our emissions requires we must move to electric vehicles and more free public transit.

And what has Ford been doing? He has figured out a way to ADD to Ontario's GHG emissions!

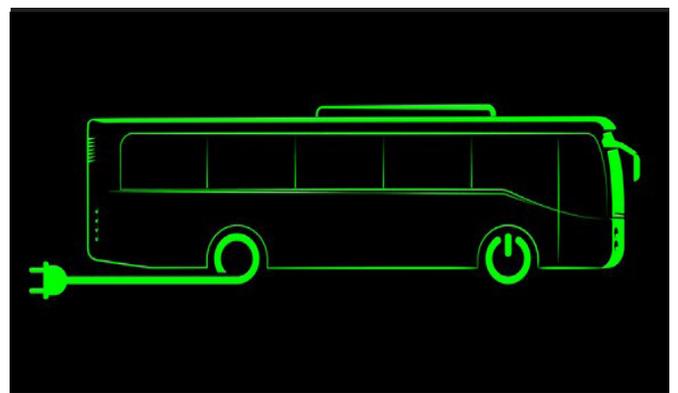
In 2018, he cancelled the Green Commercial Vehicle Program which helped large diesel trucks either shift to electric or enabled them to shift to emission cutting technologies. He deleted a section of the building code that would have required that any new home parking garage have a "rough-in" for an electric vehicle charger.

And then, under the guise of wanting to decrease gasoline prices, he cancelled the previous Liberal government rebate program on the purchase of electric vehicles (EVs). This rebate had been financed by the government's "cap and trade" program. Ford also nixed that. The EV incentive program had been massively popular, allowing Ontarians to receive from \$5,000 to \$14,000 (for a Tesla 3) when purchasing an electric vehicle.

The result of this jaw-dropping blunder? Electric vehicle sales plummeted 55 per cent in Ontario where a mere 3 per cent of vehicle sales are EVs. It is 14 per cent in BC.

In 2020, Ottawa announced \$295 million in support for EV production at the Ford Motor Company's Oakville plant. Caught off balance and -- for once -- not wanting to appear on the wrong side of history, Ontario matched the federal subsidy. And now, Doug Ford has started to claim that Ontario is going to become a world leader in the production of EVs. As he now admits, drivers will sooner or later own an EV.

Ford is proposing to take us from the frying pan into the fire. His government wants to open a mineral rich area of northern Ontario called the Ring of Fire. The chromite and nickel in the swampy James Bay lowlands could be key to the EV transition. A publicly financed road would cost at least \$1.6 billion. Indigenous communities are divided on this road to resources push. The northern peatlands contain untold amounts of stored carbon that, if disturbed, holds the potential of becoming a "carbon bomb" instead of a "carbon sink."





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The messaging behind Ford's policies is that only rich people can afford to buy electric vehicle. There's an element of truth to this, at least for now. But EVs are coming fast. With a robust rebate program and sufficient government support for EV production, prices will drop.

A real climate-first Ontario transportation plan would invest heavily in public transit to reduce the need for private vehicles. Having everyone own EVs is not a solution to climate breakdown.