

Toronto

CSIS briefed Ford's office on potential interference by China but details too limited, he says

Ontario MPP resigned from PC caucus earlier this month after allegations he calls defamatory

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Ontario Premier Doug Ford listens to members of the media during a press conference in Ottawa, on Tuesday, Feb. 7. Ford says his chief of staff received a briefing from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service after reports of election interference by China were tied to a member of his caucus. (Spencer Colby/The Canadian Press)



Canada's national security agency briefed the Ontario premier's chief of staff after allegations of election interference by China were tied to a member of his caucus, Premier Doug Ford said Tuesday.

Vincent Ke, a provincial representative for Don Valley North in Toronto, resigned from the Progressive Conservative caucus earlier this month after the allegations surfaced in a Global News report.

Ke has denied the allegations and called them defamatory.

Ford's office said the meeting occurred in November with then chief-of-staff Jamie Wallace, who then filled in the premier. Ford said the meeting was brief and "wasn't in depth."

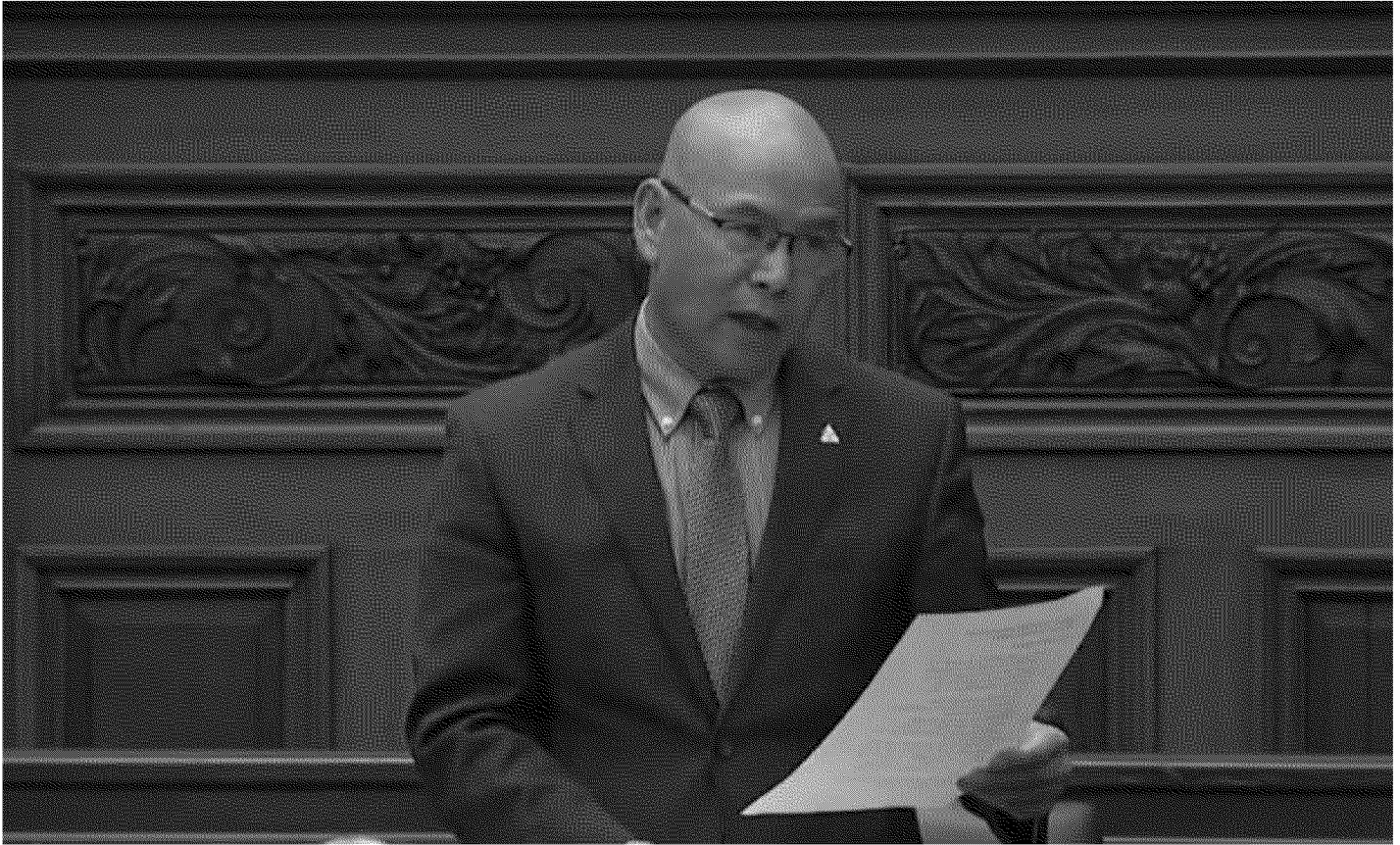
"With CSIS, everything's a big secret, they don't give you a proper briefing in my opinion," Ford said at an announcement in Vaughan, Ont., for more money to train skilled workers.

"They will say a few comments and 'we can't tell you, we can't tell you, we can't tell you.'"

- **Ontario MPP resigns from PC caucus, denies alleged link to foreign election interference**

Ford's office said it did not take action because CSIS provided limited information and provincial authorities decided to let the national security service do its work. He said the province will co-operate with the CSIS probe, but believes Ke will be exonerated.

"I have confidence that his name will be cleared," Ford said. "If his name's totally cleared, there's no reason why he can't come back to the caucus."



Vincent Ke was elected as the Progressive Conservative MPP for Don Valley North in 2018. (Ontario Legislative Assembly)

Ke has sat as an independent since March 10.

That followed a report from Global News that alleged Ke served as a financial intermediary in a Chinese Communist Party election interference scheme.

Ke was first elected in 2018 and re-elected last June.

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An earlier report by Global News in November referenced the alleged involvement of an Ontario member of provincial parliament, and while Ke wasn't publicly named at the time, Ford's office says the reporter had asked them questions about the provincial representative.

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Ford's office says the premier's chief of staff then requested and received a briefing from CSIS, but didn't receive concrete information.

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