



SPECIAL BUDGET EDITION OF MPP MILCZYN E-NEWS

Dear Neighbours:

It has been a very busy and exciting week both at Queen's Park and in Ottawa. We have seen the introduction of both the Federal and Provincial budgets and it's my pleasure to provide you with an update on how these documents will impact and facilitate the growth of Canada and Ontario.

I am confident in our Ontario budget's ability to support and improve the lives of those families and individuals living in Etobicoke-Lakeshore. The budget is designed to be fiscally responsible, to invest in infrastructure, support economic & job growth, invest in people's talents & skills, maintain core services, and planning for the retirement security of Ontarians.

At its heart this budget focuses on BUILDING ONTARIO UP for the future to ensure our competitiveness. We are moving forward with the largest expansion and renewal of infrastructure in Ontario's history to turn back our accumulated infrastructure deficit. Over the next 10 years historic investments in transit, roads, bridges, hospitals, and schools totalling \$130 Billion dollars will be made.

The Ontario Budget focuses on creating conditions that will create jobs, and build infrastructure which will benefit all Ontarians and businesses in the province as well, the focus of the Federal budget appears to be to provide financial assistance to those of us that are the most affluent and the least in need. I do acknowledge and applaud the Federal government for its commitment to a National Transit Strategy beginning in 2017. This is long overdue. However a national programme that over the next 10 years will provide just \$8.75 Billion to cities across Canada is woefully inadequate (this represents less than 7% of Ontario's infrastructure spending over the same period).

I am proud that our government has received a great deal of positive feedback, from multiple sectors, in response to the provincial budget.

ONTARIO BUDGET 2015 CONTENT

TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE - MOVING ONTARIO FORWARD

The province through its ongoing and planned investments, is leading the renewal and expansion of transportation and other critical infrastructure for Ontarians. Over the last decade the province has made unprecedented investments in public infrastructure, including transit, supporting mobility and economic growth across Ontario. To support 'BUILDING TOGETHER', Ontario's long-term infrastructure plan, investments of more than \$100 Billion over 10 years are underway, including \$50.00 billion for transportation infrastructure. The record investment levels have supported improved GO Transit service and major projects that are underway and planned such as:

The Union Pearson Express, which begins service in the spring, providing a dedicated rail link connecting Toronto Pearson international Airport with Union Station in downtown Toronto in 25 minutes

The Mississauga Transitway, the first phase of which include 4 stations which opened in November of 2014. Work continues to complete the full 18 km corridor of the dedicated transitway by 2017.

Construction of the Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit (LRT) project. The Eglinton Crosstown LRT is expected to be completed by 2020, providing fast, reliable, and convenient transit moving commuters in half the time of current transit options.

TAKING CARE OF OUR SENIORS

We know many Ontarians cannot save enough for retirement because workplace pension benefits are not available for many workers, particularly those in temporary or non-standard employment. In 2013, only 35% of workers participated in a workplace pension plan. We also know that CPP benefits are insufficient. Although the maximum CPP benefit is about \$12,800, the average benefit is only about \$6,900 in Ontario. People are living longer. Half of today's 20-year-olds are expected to reach 90 years of age and Personal Retirement Savings are low. That is why, in Budget 2014, the government announced the creation of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. The ORPP would provide a predictable stream of income in retirement for life, and index benefits to inflation and aim to replace 15% of pre-retirement earnings up to \$90,000 (in 2014 dollars). The legislation would also require contributions of up to 3.8%, shared equally between employers and employees and require benefits to be earned as contributions are made, ensuring that younger generations would not pay additional costs associated with older workers benefits.

PROGRESS SINCE BUDGET 2014

In December 2014, the government took two key steps by Introducing Bill 56, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Act, 2014 that laid the foundation for the plan and provided a commitment to establish the ORPP by January 1, 2017. We also released a consultation paper on key design questions, including: whether to include participants in certain pension and savings plans; whether to set a minimum \$3500 earnings threshold, below which contributions would not be made; how to address retirement income security for the self-employed

PROGRESS IN BUDGET 2015

This budget introduces legislation that would establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Administration Corporation, a professional, independent organization that would be responsible for administering the ORPP. The government is considering responses to the consultation paper and will announce conclusions on the key design questions shortly.

SUPPORTING ONTARIO STUDENTS

In the 2015 budget nearly 100 major capital projects in the elementary and secondary system are planned or underway across the province. The government has committed to investing \$120M over 3 years to create thousands of child care spaces in school as well as Investing \$40M in technology and innovation in classrooms from kindergarten to grade 12.

We are also launching the Experience Ontario program with an investment of \$20M over 3 years, to help graduating high school students better identify their future goals.

On the Student Assistance front with respect to our students enter post-secondary education, **we are modernizing access to assistance.**

- We are indexing maximum aid to inflation, and we are the first province in Canada to do so.
- We are creating a vehicle exemption for the Ontario Student Assistance Program.
- We are increasing the student loan limit to \$155 per week for single students and \$355 per week for people who are married or who have children
- We are also renewing the Ontario Youth Jobs Strategy by investing an additional \$250M over two years, to fund a range of programs including :
 - **Youth Job Connection** - intensive employment support programs for youth with multiple barriers to employment
 - **Youth Employment services** - to give youth access to job search resources and information to help them transition into the labour market
 - **Pre-apprenticeship programs** to help potential entrants develop their skills and readiness to find work as apprentices, an investment of \$13 M over 2 years
 - **Increases to the Per Diem funding** for in-class apprenticeship training, an investment of \$19M over 3 years
 - **Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund**, to help colleges and other delivery agents invest in equipment, technology and space, an investment of \$23M over 2 years
 - **Entrepreneurship support**, including Campus-Linked Accelerators, Starter Company programs

and the Youth Business Accelerator Program

The investments and commitments in the 2015 will contribute to cultivating an even stronger workforce and competitive business climate for Ontario.

GROWING THE ECONOMY & ASSET MANAGEMENT

We are finding more innovative ways to grow the economy, which includes unlocking the value of provincial assets. All net proceeds from this plan, including broadening ownership in Hydro One, will flow through the Trillium Trust to build new roads, bridges and public transit that will benefit everyone in the province for years to come. We are also investing in people of all ages today and giving Ontarians the support they need to get the right skills and the right jobs, to build the strong economy of tomorrow. This includes investing an additional \$250 million over two years in the Ontario Youth Jobs Strategy, bringing the total investment in youth employment programming to more than \$565 million. Ontario is projecting a deficit of \$8.5 billion in 2015-16, less than previously forecast, and the lowest forecast since the onset of the global recession. We will continue to take a thoughtful and deliberate approach to our path to balance with a deficit of \$4.8 billion forecast for 2016-17 and a return to balance by 2017-18. A balanced budget will sustain the programs and services that families and communities rely on over the long term.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE 2015 PROVINCIAL BUDGET

2015 Ontario Budget: Budget Speech

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2015/statement.html>

Read the 2015 Budget

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2015/>

2015 Budget News Release

<http://news.ontario.ca/mof/en/2015/04/budget-2015-makes-largest-infrastructure-investment-in-ontarios-history.html>

The Ontario Ministry of Finance Website

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/>

FEDERAL BUDGET

The budget presented by the federal government missed the mark. Our government feels they are not investing to the extent that Ontarians expect and need.

Ontarians know that the fiscal imbalance exists, because they live this reality every day. When Ontarians pay \$11 billion more to the federal government than they receive back in federal transfers, programs, and services, they know a fiscal imbalance exists.

This is money that could otherwise be invested in health care, education and services that Ontarians rely on. When the federal government chooses to provide tax cuts for the wealthy instead of investing in the skills and talents of everyday people, they know the fiscal imbalance exists.

When Ontario is investing significantly more in building roads, transit and transportation projects which will benefit the national economy, they know a fiscal imbalance exists.

The federal government is only committing \$750 million over two years for infrastructure investments which will not even begin until 2017-18. And this is just for transit. It is promising that the federal government has indicated a need for a National Transit Strategy, however, the funding allocated for this proposed project is woefully inadequate and pales in comparison to the leadership our province is taking on the need to invest in transit.

There is no funding for vital infrastructure projects that people rely on like roads, bridges and infrastructure maintenance. And that is their funding for the entire country.

In contrast, Ontario is spending over \$130 billion over the next ten years. Not only has the federal government missed the transit train, they are not even in the station.

Ontario will continue to advocate for a strong federal partner.

We believe it's the right time for a new Economic Union where all levels of government, across the country, work together to support the high quality services Canadians rely on.

Integral to the Economic Union is long-term, pan-Canadian infrastructure strategy, the creation of a Canadian energy strategy, and the reduction of interprovincial trade barriers.

Ontario believes the federal government must partner with the provinces and territories and focus on areas that will build the foundation for job creation and economic growth.

We will continue to call on the federal government to modernize the fiscal arrangements to support economic development across the country and advocate that the federal government must avoid unilateral decisions that negatively impact Ontarians and Ontario's economic growth prospects - particularly given the vertical fiscal imbalance within the federation.

Read The 2015 Federal Budget

<http://www.budget.gc.ca/2015/docs/plan/toc-tdm-eng.html>

Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions, concerns or inquiries. I always enjoy speaking with my constituents about the future of our riding, our province and our country.

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