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Archived - 2014 Mandate letter: Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade

Premier's instructions to the Minister on priorities for the year 2014



September 25, 2014

The Honourable Michael Chan
Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade
Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade
Sixth Floor, 400 University Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R9

Dear Minister Chan:

I am honoured to welcome you to your role as Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade. We have a strong Cabinet in place, and I am confident that together we will build Ontario up, create new opportunities and champion a secure future for people across our province. The people of Ontario have entrusted their government to be a force for good, and we will reward that trust by working every day in the best interests of every person in this province.

As we implement a balanced and comprehensive plan for Ontario, we will lead from the activist centre. We will place emphasis on partnerships with businesses, communities and people to help foster continued economic growth and make a positive impact on the lives of every Ontarian. This collaborative approach will shape all the work we do. It will ensure we engage people on the issues that matter the most to them, and that we implement meaningful solutions to our shared challenges.

Our government's most recent Speech from the Throne outlined a number of key priorities that will guide your work as minister. Growing the economy and helping to create good jobs are fundamental to building more opportunity and security, now and in the future. That critical priority is supported by strategic investments in the talent and skills of our people, from childhood to retirement. It is supported through the building of modern infrastructure, transit and a seamless transportation network. It is supported by a dynamic business climate that thrives on innovation, creativity and partnerships to foster greater prosperity. And it is reflected across all of our government, in every area, and will extensively inform our programs and policies.

As we move forward with our plan to grow the economy and create jobs, we will do so through the lens of fiscal prudence. Our 2014 Budget reinforces our commitment to balancing the budget by 2017-18; it is essential that every area adheres to the program-spending objectives established in it. We will choose to invest wisely in initiatives that strengthen Ontario's competitive advantage, create jobs and provide vital public services to our families. The President of the Treasury Board, collaborating with the Minister of Finance, will work closely with you and your fellow Cabinet members to ensure that our government meets its fiscal targets. The President of the Treasury Board will also lead the government's efforts on accountability, openness and modernization as we implement new accountability measures across government.

As Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, you will work to attract a skilled workforce and build a stronger economy, help newcomers and their families achieve success, and secure international trade and investment opportunities for the benefit of all Ontarians. You will ensure that newcomers are able to participate fully in Ontario's inclusive and diverse society and will continue to work with the federal government to maximize the economic benefits of immigration to Ontario. Your goal is to ensure that Ontario remains the top destination for newcomers to Canada.

Your ministry's specific priorities include:

Ensuring Newcomers Prosper in Ontario

- Seeking to re-introduce the Ontario Immigration Act early in your mandate. The act would enshrine our government's vision for immigration — which recognizes the important role immigrants play in growing the economy — and the importance of family and humanitarian commitments.
- Continuing to implement Ontario's Immigration Strategy, I ask that you release the first Immigration Strategy Progress Report as soon as possible and annually going forward.

Working with the Federal Government to Maximize the Economic Benefits of Immigration

- Encouraging the federal government to be a willing partner in supporting Ontario's goals for immigration. I ask that you continue to engage the federal government to obtain more input on the process of immigration to Ontario.
- Pursuing an expansion of the Provincial Nominee Program base allocations. This expansion would increase Ontario's direct role in immigrant selection and maximize our province's ability to respond to its unique economic and labour market needs. As part of these efforts, you will, subject to federal and provincial privacy laws, work to improve the Provincial Nominee Program by making it more transparent and accountable — and by enabling it to support a greater number of annual nominees.
- Continuing to improve our government's bridge training programs so that immigrants with professional credentials can work in their field as quickly as possible. You will work with the ministers of Education and of Training, Colleges and Universities to ensure that people receiving bridge training, language instruction and other forms of adult education can make the transition from adult education to the integrated employment and training system.
- Calling on the federal government to work with provincial governments, regulatory bodies and other applicable entities to simplify and streamline the foreign credential recognition process. Your goal is to

fortify efforts and initiatives that enable new Canadians trained elsewhere to have their international training recognized so they can work in their field as quickly as possible.

Building Strong, Inclusive and Diverse Communities

- Striving to build strong, inclusive and diverse communities. Ontario is a province that celebrates the benefits of being the new home of people from many cultures from around the world.
- Collaborating with the Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs to make progress on achieving our five per cent Francophone immigration target. Your goal is to support the growth of a strong Franco-Ontarian community.
- Working with the federal government to increase Francophone immigration — and to enhance pre-arrival and settlement supports for them.

Supporting Volunteers

- Examining opportunities to develop and implement Ontario's first Volunteerism Strategy, which would provide an ongoing framework for our government's support for volunteers. The framework should complement the Pan Am Games initiative and emphasize the importance of youth civic engagement and training.

Maximizing Ontario's Global Trade Opportunities

- Developing a strategy that leverages Ontario's diversity to ensure better international trade and investment opportunities.
- Working with the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to establish a ministerial working group. You and the minister will co-chair the group, which will also include the ministers of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Education; Energy; Health and Long-Term Care; Northern Development and Mines; Research and Innovation; Training, Colleges and Universities; Tourism, Culture and Sport and other ministers, as appropriate. The committee's objective is to ensure strong collaboration and information-sharing — and maximize international trade and foreign investment opportunities.
- Continuing to implement the Going Global Trade Strategy. The strategy will advance Ontario's international trade interests and ensure that Ontario benefits from global investment and trade opportunities.
- Working to ensure that the Provincial Nominee Program is better recognized as an important economic tool to attract foreign investment, entrepreneurs, professionals and trade opportunities.
- Expanding the reach of Ontario's exports — particularly to fast-growing emerging markets — in partnership with the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure. You will jointly pursue initiatives that expand the opportunity for Ontario firms to connect with foreign buyers and investors, showcase innovative goods and services, and find new markets. To this end, the 2015 Pan/Parapan American Games offer you an opportunity to establish productive relationships between Ontario's industries and business delegations from the 41 member nations of the Pan American Sports Organization.
- Expanding international representation and strengthening relationships with Ontario's major trading partners. I ask that you continue to engage Ontario's trading partners and explore opportunities for new and expanded trade agreements.
- Building on the existing linkages created by Ontario's and Canada's International Marketing Centres around the world. You will use those linkages to facilitate new capital investments by foreign-based companies in Ontario. Your goal is to help create jobs and opportunities for our highly skilled and diversified population.
- Continuing to develop Ontario as a destination for investment and trade by reaching out to our global partners. Starting with the Premier's planned trade mission to China in the fall of 2014, you will explore

and pursue similar opportunities for the province to lead trade missions to other countries. I ask that you focus on emerging markets and industries — and at the same time include our existing trading partners and industries.

We have an ambitious agenda for the next four years. I know that, by working together in partnership, we can be successful. The above list of priority initiatives is not meant to be exhaustive, as there are many other responsibilities that you and your ministry will need to carry out. To that end, this mandate letter is to be used by your ministry to develop more detailed plans for implementation of the initiatives above, in addition to other initiatives not highlighted in this letter.

I ask that you continue to build on the strong relationships we have with the Ontario Public Service, the broader public sector, other levels of government, and the private, non-profit and voluntary sectors. We want to be the most open and transparent government in the country. We want to be a government that works for the people of this province — and with them. It is of the utmost importance that we lead responsibly, act with integrity, manage spending wisely and are accountable for every action we take.

I look forward to working together with you in building opportunity today, and securing the future for all Ontarians.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Wynne
Premier

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