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Archived - 2014 Mandate letter: Intergovernmental Affairs

Premier's instructions on priorities for the year 2014



September 25, 2014

It is a great pleasure and distinct honour to serve as the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. 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 my work as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. 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 her 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 Intergovernmental Affairs, I will develop a framework that identifies priorities and includes a recommended approach to relationship-building, strategic communications and engagement with other governments and partners. In all matters of both national and provincial significance, the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs (MIA) will continue to provide support for the government's efforts to call for leadership and partnership from the federal government. This will enable our government to champion the building of a better social union for all Canadians, as well as a more efficient, more effective and more competitive economic union that allows Canadians to thrive.

The ministry's specific priorities include:

Modernizing Fiscal Arrangements

- Working with the Minister of Finance and other ministers to advance Ontario's interests by developing principled options related to the modernization of fiscal arrangements with the federal government — and equalization reforms that treat Ontario fairly. In particular, I will work with the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to advocate for predictable and dedicated federal support for infrastructure as part of the modernization of the fiscal arrangements.

Reducing Interprovincial Trade Barriers

- Working with the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to create an efficient, effective and competitive economic union. I will champion the reduction of interprovincial trade barriers, as appropriate and consistent with Ontario's broader interests, by supporting the minister's work on a proposal to update the Agreement on Internal Trade.

Building Relationships with our Partners at the Council of the Federation

- Continuing to develop and maintain strong relations with all of Ontario's provincial and territorial partners in the Council of the Federation (COF). In particular, I will continue to build Ontario's relationship with Québec — including holding joint Ontario-Québec Cabinet meetings — to the benefit of both provinces.
- Working with the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure to create a new Premiers' Productivity and Innovation Council to gather best practices in innovation and productivity. I will present this council to other provinces and territories as a model to be considered for pan-Canadian co-operation.

Collaborating on International Relations and Trade Missions

- Working with the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, I will play an active role in creating an efficient and effective economic partnership with the United States — especially with the Great Lakes states — and with Ontario's priority global markets in Europe, Asia and Central America/South America.

- Advancing Ontario's international interests in my role as Premier on the COE's Mission to China in October 2014, and working with the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade to support similar trade missions in the future.
- Continuing the vital role of the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs' Office of International Relations and Protocol as our government's chief point of contact for foreign consular and diplomatic offices, and visiting dignitaries in Ontario.

Helping Develop a Canadian Energy Strategy

- Working with the Minister of Energy, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, and other provinces and territories to develop a Canadian Energy Strategy that will ensure a clean, reliable and sustainable energy supply.
- Working to ensure that this strategy balances national interests with the unique needs of the provinces and territories. My goal is to improve energy efficiency and conservation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and foster innovation in the energy sector. I will also work to ensure that the strategy includes a focus on facilitating imports and exports of electricity between Ontario and its neighbouring provinces.
- Supporting efforts to encourage federal partnership in addressing the climate change challenge — which is both local and global in scale.

Adjusting Electoral Boundaries

- Working with the Attorney General to bring forward a legislative proposal pertaining to Ontario's electoral boundaries.

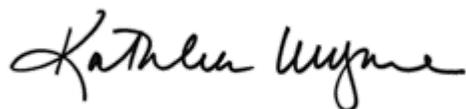
Collaborating on Labour Market Development Agreements

- Working with the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities on Labour Market Development Agreements, including collaborating on proposals made to the federal government.

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 I will need to carry out. To that end, I will work with the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs to develop more detailed plans for implementation of the initiatives above, in addition to other initiatives not highlighted in this letter.

I will 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 to build opportunity today, and secure the future for all Ontarians.



Updated: August 9, 2019

Published: September 25, 2014

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