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Archived - 2014 Mandate letter: Seniors' Secretariat

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



September 25, 2014

The Honourable Mario Sergio
Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs
Ontario Seniors' Secretariat
777 Bay Street
Suite 601C
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2J4

Dear Minister Sergio:

I am honoured to welcome you back to your role as Minister Responsible for Seniors 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 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 Responsible for Seniors Affairs, you will continue to engage with seniors communities across the province. You will also continue to work with our many stakeholders. They include the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations, Alzheimer's Society, Ontario Retirement Communities Association, Older Adults Centres' Association of Ontario, Elder Abuse Ontario, Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors, Advocacy Centre for the Elderly and Ontario Long-Term Care Association amongst others. You will listen to the voices of seniors and take their views into consideration when shaping policies and programs. You will work with other ministers to bring seniors' perspectives forward as they develop policies and programs that impact seniors.

Your specific priorities include:

Developing Services and Supports for Seniors

- Working with seniors and community partners to successfully deliver the Seniors Community Grant Program, which will help seniors stay engaged and connected to their communities. We are doubling funding for this program to \$1 million per year, as announced in the 2014 Budget.
- Continuing to strengthen and promote the role of elderly persons centres. These centres ensure that seniors have ready access to places in their community that promote healthy, active aging and wellness.
- Continuing to provide strong leadership for initiatives related to age-friendly communities, elder abuse, and wandering prevention for persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.
- Developing clear government policy on community hubs. You will work with the ministers of Health and Long-Term Care, Education, the Associate Minister of Long-Term Care and Wellness and other ministers to consult with stakeholders when developing this policy. I ask that the policy promote the efficient use of public assets and build better ties between schools, municipalities and other community organizations — including those that provide services to seniors.
- Continuing to implement the Retirement Homes Act, 2010 and providing ongoing oversight of the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority.
- Providing seniors' perspectives on housing issues to the ministers of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Health and Long-Term Care.

Supporting Seniors' Health and Wellness

- Working closely with the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to ensure that health care services provided in homes and communities reflect the needs of seniors.
- Support the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) to develop a strategy on community wellness, including supports and programs to help seniors stay active and

healthy.

- Advising and supporting the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on improving dementia supports, including new memory clinics.

Building Retirement Security

- Working with the Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) to create the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. The plan will help provide additional financial security to our seniors in their retirement.

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

Updated: August 9, 2019

Published: September 25, 2014

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