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



September 25, 2014

The Honourable Deborah Matthews
Deputy Premier
President of the Treasury Board
Room 4320, Fourth Floor, Whitney Block
99 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1W3

Dear Minister Matthews:

I am honoured to welcome you to your role as President of the Treasury Board. 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. You will work closely with your fellow Cabinet members to ensure that our government meets its fiscal targets. You will also lead the government's efforts on accountability, openness and modernization as we implement new accountability measures across government.

As President of the Treasury Board, you will support our government's efforts to build a dynamic business climate on a foundation of fiscal responsibility. You will work closely with the Minister of Finance, me, in my capacity as Premier, Treasury Board members and other Cabinet members to transform and modernize public sector service delivery while protecting vital public services. You will drive efficiencies and reduce costs to achieve our commitment to eliminate the deficit by 2017-18. Reducing the deficit is not only financially prudent — but managing our resources responsibly also demonstrates our government's commitment to fund the priorities of Ontarians.

Your specific priorities as President of the Treasury Board include:

Achieving our Fiscal Targets

- Implementing measures to meet an annual program review savings target, and establishing a Committee of Ministers to find savings in the province's Budget. You will achieve that target by maintaining or embracing proven approaches to transform the delivery of public services, while reducing costs that are not essential to delivering service.
- Continuing to work with all ministers to review and, where appropriate, act on the recommendations of the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services.
- Conducting an ongoing review of Information and Information Technology (I&IT) to modernize service delivery and products across all ministries — including ensuring that costs and expenditures provide value for money and are aligned to government priorities. This also includes a strengthened commitment to using digital technology to support efficient business processes and service delivery as we continue to move toward paperless, convenient government services.
- Oversee the Results-based Planning process, ensuring that Treasury Board decision-making is supported by evidence-based policy and a focus on outcomes.

Overseeing Labour Relations and Compensation

- Enhancing the role of the Ontario Public Service (OPS) — under the leadership, support and oversight of the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) — as a top employer that successfully attracts and retains talent, and continually strives to be a diverse workplace that is representative of Ontario's greatest strength — its people.
- Managing compensation by reaching collective agreements with OPS and broader public service bargaining agents through respectful bargaining processes that adhere to the fiscal plan. You will help ensure that any modest wage increases negotiated are absorbed by employers within Ontario's existing fiscal plan through efficiency and productivity gains, or other trade-offs, so that service levels continue to meet the public's needs.

- Establishing compensation frameworks to control senior executive compensation in the broader public sector, subject to the passage of the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act.

Building an Open and Accountable Government

- Working to meet our commitment to increase our government's accountability and transparency to the people of Ontario. Under your leadership, the TBS will work with other ministries, agencies and the broader public sector to implement the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, if passed.
- Increasing the opportunity for the public, as part of our commitment to open government, to have better access to, learn about and participate in government — and to have their voices as Ontarians heard as we develop policy and undertake planning that affects them. You will lead this effort by working with ministers to develop and advance the Open Government Action Plan, including the ongoing response to the Engagement Team's recommendations.

Moving Forward on Classified Agency Accountability, Transparency and Reform

- Collaborating with other ministers to strengthen the accountability of classified agencies by improving agency oversight through frequent risk assessments.
- Implementing our commitment to require agencies to publicly post governance documents and expense information. To ensure that agencies are functioning well, agency chairs/chief executive officers will be required to attest annually that their organizations are in full compliance with all government directives. In addition, and if passed, the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act will provide the Integrity Commissioner with the authority to review expense claims of appointees and senior executives.
- Working with ministers to review all agency mandates on a regular basis, and to ensure they are aligned with government policy objectives and priorities. For example, you will work to reduce duplication between the functions of the OPS and broader public sector.
- Continuing to support — as stated in the 2014 Budget — the goal of reducing the number of classified agencies by March 2015 to about 30 per cent less than the 2011 baseline of 246 agencies.
- Working closely with the Premier's Advisory Council on Government Assets to review Ontario's alcohol and electricity entities.

Building Modern Infrastructure

- Ensuring the prioritization — in partnership with the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure — and approval of the government's infrastructure investments while living within the government's fiscal plan. Public investment in infrastructure is a critical element of our economic plan, which includes more than \$130 billion in investment over the next decade in new hospitals, schools, undergraduate campuses, safer roads and public transit. World-class infrastructure drives economic growth and prosperity, creates jobs and enhances Ontarians' quality of life.

Leading the Poverty Reduction Strategy

As President of the Treasury Board, you will appreciate just how important reducing homelessness and poverty are to the province. Homelessness costs Ontario's economy. Investments in housing can mean savings down the road because people are healthier, more ready for employment, and participating in the community. As we look for ways to make the most of public investments, it becomes clear that human resources are the province's most valuable asset in overcoming its fiscal challenges. When you leave no one behind, you arrive at a new destination stronger than ever.

Strategic decisions about our investments must be informed by our commitment to protecting the most vulnerable in our province. Building on our government's work under the first strategy, I am honoured to appoint you as Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy and I ask that you oversee the implementation of Ontario's new Poverty Reduction Strategy: Realizing Our Potential.

Your leadership on this file will include working with our community, businesses and not-for-profit partners to achieve better outcomes for Ontarians living in poverty. Working with your minister colleagues, I ask that you focus on:

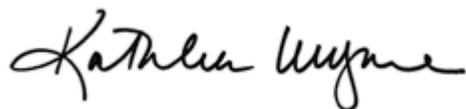
- Continuing to break the cycle of poverty for children and youth.
- Enabling persons to move toward employment and income security.
- Working toward a long-term goal of ending homelessness in Ontario.
- Using evidence-based social policy and measuring success.
- Continuing to call on the federal government to work collaboratively with Ontario to develop and implement solutions that meet the needs of Ontarians.

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 on 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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