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## Archived - September 2016 Mandate letter: Francophone Affairs

Premier's instructions to the Minister on priorities.



September 23, 2016

The Honourable Marie-France Lalonde  
Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs  
Office of Francophone Affairs  
700 Bay Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
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Dear Minister Lalonde:

Welcome to your role as Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs. As we mark the mid-point of our mandate, we have a strong and new Cabinet, and are poised to redouble our efforts to deliver on our top priority — creating jobs and growth. Guided by our balanced plan to build Ontario up for everyone, we will continue to work together to deliver real benefits and more inclusive growth that will help people in their everyday lives.

We embark on this important part of our mandate knowing that our four-part economic plan is working — we are making the largest investment in public infrastructure in Ontario's history, making postsecondary education more affordable and accessible, leading the transition to a low-carbon economy and the fight against climate change, and building retirement security for workers.

Building on our ambitious and activist agenda, and with a focus on implementing our economic plan, we will continue to forge partnerships with businesses, educators, labour, communities, the not-for-profit sector and with

all Ontarians to foster economic growth and to make a genuine, positive difference in people's lives. Collaboration and active listening remain at the heart of the work we undertake on behalf of the people of Ontario — these are values that ensure a common purpose, stimulate positive change and help achieve desired outcomes. With this in mind, I ask that you work closely with your Cabinet colleagues to deliver positive results on initiatives that cut across several ministries, such as our Climate Change Action Plan, Business Growth Initiative, and the Highly Skilled Workforce Strategy. I also ask you to collaborate with the Minister Responsible for Digital Government to drive digital transformation across government and modernize public service delivery.

We have made tangible progress and we have achieved the following key results:

- Led the planning and execution of the commemoration of 400 years of French presence in Ontario in 2015, including funding 62 cultural and tourism community projects across the province.
- Granted the partial designation of the University of Ottawa and York University, Glendon Campus, and full designation to the City of Markham effective July 1, 2018. Explored options to increase access to French-language postsecondary programs in Ontario, including committing to establish a planning board by fall 2016 for a French-language university in central southwestern Ontario and studying potential demand.
- Collaborated with the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games Secretariat to ensure that French-language services and representation of Francophone culture were successfully integrated into the Games.

Your mandate is to work on ensuring that Francophones can fully contribute to social, economic and political life in Ontario, including accessing services in French. Your specific priorities include:

## **Strengthening French-language Services to Promote the Ability of Franco-Ontarians to Access the Services They Need in French**

- Working with the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to ensure Franco-Ontarians are able to access health services in French.
- Working with the Attorney General to complete and assess the pilot project launched in May 2015 to facilitate access to French-language services at the Ottawa courthouse, and explore options to extend or expand the pilot to enhance access to court services in French across the province.
- Working with the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development to establish a planning board and study potential market demand for a French-language university associated with a current institution in central southwestern Ontario.
- Exploring options to streamline the designation process under the *French Language Services Act* for requesting communities and organizations.

## **Promoting French and Francophone Culture at the Provincial, National and International Levels and Celebrating it Across the Province**

- Working with the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport to support the inclusion of French-language services and the promotion of Franco-Ontarian culture in government's Culture Strategy and the celebrations of Ontario's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Working with the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to consider the input provided by the expert group on Francophone immigration to help make progress towards the achievement of the 5 per cent Francophone immigration target. Work to achieve this target could include leveraging strategies developed in collaboration with provincial, territorial and federal partners to be presented at the Francophone Immigration Forum in spring 2017, and taking advantage of opportunities such as the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie to promote Ontario as a destination for Francophone immigrants.

- Continuing to support Ontario's strong partnership with Québec, with a particular focus on the implementation of the Trade and Co-operation Agreement Between Ontario and Québec, in partnership with the Minister of Economic Development and Growth.
- Working with the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs to advance Ontario's application for membership as a participating government in the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie.

## **Ensuring that the Policies, Programs and Services Designed and Delivered by the Government and its Public Sector Partners are in Keeping with the Requirements of the *French Language Services Act***

- Promoting the use of the Francophone lens tool to ensure that French-language services are considered from early stages of policy and program development.
- Promoting the use of learning modules that reinforce the practice of active offer across the Ontario government and third parties.

In addition to the priority activities above, I ask that you also deliver results for Ontarians by driving progress in the following areas:

- Continue to oversee the application of the *French Language Services Act* and to collaborate with the independent French Language Services Commissioner in this regard.
- Work with key ministry partners to further enhance access to services in French, particularly in the health, children and youth services, justice, education and social services sectors.
- Provide advice and recommendations to other ministers and partners on how to better integrate Francophone immigrants, economically and culturally, into our communities.
- Continue to work with ministers and third parties toward the implementation of *Regulation 284/11*, governing the delivery of French-language services by third parties.

As you know, taking action on the recommendations contained in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report is a priority for our government. That is why we released *The Journey Together*, a document that serves as a blueprint for making our government's commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples a reality. As we move forward with the implementation of the report, I ask you and your fellow Cabinet members to work together, in co-operation with our Indigenous partners, to help achieve real and measurable change for Indigenous communities.

Having made significant progress over the past year in implementing our community hubs strategy, I encourage you and your Cabinet colleagues to ensure that the Premier's Special Advisor on Community Hubs and the Community Hubs Secretariat, at the Ministry of Infrastructure, are given the support they need to continue their vital cross-government work aimed at making better use of public properties, encouraging multi-use spaces and helping communities create financially sustainable hub models.

Responsible fiscal management remains an overarching priority for our government — a priority echoed strongly in our 2016 Budget. Thanks to our disciplined approach to the province's finances over the past two years, we are on track to balance the budget next year, in 2017–18, which will also lower the province's debt-to-GDP ratio. Yet this is not the moment to rest on our past accomplishments: it is essential that we work collaboratively across every sector of government to support evidence-based decision-making to ensure programs and services are effective, efficient and sustainable, in order to balance the budget by 2017–18, maintain balance in 2018–19, and position the province for longer-term fiscal sustainability.

Marathon runners will tell you that an event's halfway mark is an opportunity to reflect on progress made — but they will also tell you that it is the ideal moment to concentrate more intently and to move decisively forward. At this halfway mark of this government's mandate, I encourage you to build on the momentum that we have successfully achieved over the past two years, to work in tandem with your fellow ministers to advance our economic plan and to ensure that Ontario remains a great place to live, work and raise a family.

I look forward to working together with you to build opportunity and prosperity for all Ontarians.

Sincerely,



Kathleen Wynne  
Premier

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