

EXPERIENCE.
STRENGTH.
LEADERSHIP.

The Ontario PC Party

Toll Free: 1-866-822-EVES Fax: 416-861-9593

120-2020 Adelaide Street West, Toronto, ON M5H 1T1

www.OntarioPC.com E-mail: questions@OntarioPC.com

Authorized by the C.F.O. of the Ontario PC Party



EXPERIENCE FOR THE ROAD AHEAD.

The Road Ahead Policy Papers

Each of these documents contains our detailed policies for building a better Ontario in one of 18 key areas. You'll find the complete contents of these papers on our website at www.ontariopc.com. Free paper copies are available simply by calling us toll-free at 1-866-822-EVES (3837).

#1 - Keeping Our Economy Strong

Includes tax cuts to help create jobs...balanced budgets...paying down Ontario's debt...cutting waste and improving efficiency

#2 - Better Health Care for You and Your Family

Includes more doctors, nurses and hospitals...shorter waiting times...accountability to patients and taxpayers...investments in priority services

#3 - Helping Students Achieve Success

Includes mandatory literacy...phonics-based reading...no strikes during the school year...school report cards...outside expert volunteers...more choice for parents

#4 - Providing Advanced Education

Includes a place for every student...quality assurance funding...more student assistance...more new schools...apprenticeship growth...high school co-op

#5 - Safe Communities in a Secure Ontario

Includes new rights for victims...more police on our streets...tough action on crime...securing our border...consumer protection

#6 - Safeguarding the Natural Environment

Includes clean air...clean water...Ontario's Living Legacy

#7 - Helping Families and Children

Includes a Minister for Human Development...helping families cope...early childhood development...investing in children's health...fighting child exploitation

#8 - Supporting Ontario's Seniors

Includes a break on property taxes...investments in health care...support for caregivers...support for working seniors

#9 - Reliable, Affordable, Sustainable Energy

Includes protecting consumers...building the supply...using clean energy...promoting conservation

#10 - Smart Growth in Ontario

Includes the highways and transit we need...the cities and towns we want...environmental responsibility...fighting GTA gridlock

#11 - A Fair Deal for Municipalities

Includes a stronger voice...flexible revenue sources...more accountability

#12 - The Road Ahead for Rural Ontario

Includes better health care...support for schools...support for farmers...preserving our rural heritage

**#13 - *The Road Ahead
for Northern Ontario***

Includes a stronger voice...a stronger economy...
better health care...support for schools...safe
communities

#14 - *Providing a Hand Up*

Includes more accountability...more benefits to the
disabled...responsible care for the homeless

#15 - *A Passport to Ontario*

Includes a made-for-Ontario immigration
system...better security at our border...the skilled
people we need...fighting fraud and abuse

#16 - *Better Government Service*

Includes service where and when you need it...
effective regulation, less red tape

#17 - *A Stronger Democracy for Ontario*

Includes more public input...parliamentary reform...
more independence for MPPs...opening up the
budget

#18 - *A Workers' Bill of Rights*

Includes a stronger voice for workers...access to
union information



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

KEEPING OUR ECONOMY STRONG

Tax Cuts for Jobs
Tax Cuts for Homeowners
Tax Cuts for Seniors
Tax Cuts for Caregivers
Balanced Budgets
Cutting Waste



The Need for a Strong Economy

A strong economy is the foundation of a great Ontario. All of the services Ontarians cherish most – world class health care, quality education, safe communities, and protection for our natural environment – are built on our economic strength.

A healthy economy means more jobs and better jobs, more money for hard working Ontarians and their families, and more revenue to fund our priority services. And, in these uncertain times, keeping our economy strong is more important than ever.

Ontario: Strong and Prosperous

Since coming to office in 1995, we've taken decisive action to build Ontario's economy into a powerhouse—cutting taxes, balancing budgets, paying down the debt and investing in our priority services like health care and education.

The result? Ontario has led the Industrialized World in economic growth since 1995, and well over one million new jobs have been created. That's 405 new jobs a DAY since September, 1995!

In fact, if Ontario were a separate country it would be the second most prosperous place on Earth, behind only the United States!

Dalton McGuinty's Liberals and Howard Hampton's NDP say the job is done. They want to cash in on our hard-earned progress and go on a spending spree. That may sound tempting in the short term, but in the long term it means going back to tax hikes, deficits and a struggling economy again. The thrills of a one-time spending party will leave the province with a long-term hangover.

Maintaining our economic strength and prosperity is a job that never ends, and one that requires strong, experienced leadership. We have to always be working to spend smarter, remain competitive, live within our means and keep the economy growing.

Our plan to keep Ontario's economy strong, so that you and your family can continue to enjoy an ever-improving quality of life on The Road Ahead, includes the following commitments:

- Cutting income tax rates for working Ontarians, again
- Giving homeowners an income tax break by allowing them to deduct their mortgage interest payments from their taxable income
- Cutting property taxes for Ontario seniors
- Giving tax breaks to disabled people, family caregivers and low-income Ontarians
- Cutting the corporate income tax rate, particularly for small businesses
- Cutting the capital tax on employers, on our way to eliminating this tax entirely
- Maintaining a balanced budget

- Paying another \$5 billion off the provincial debt
- Saving at least \$700 million a year through measures such as
 - Creating a Government Waste Elimination Task Force
 - Freezing the size of the bureaucracy for at least two years
 - Selling off surplus land and unneeded buildings

More Tax Cuts for People and Employers

We've cut more taxes than any other government in Ontario history – a total of 225 tax reductions! These cuts, in everything from personal income tax rates and payroll taxes, to property and sales taxes, have helped fuel the strongest economic and job growth ever seen in Canada. They have also given the people of Ontario their first real tax relief in nearly a generation.

We will continue to reduce taxes on hard-working Ontarians and the companies that employ them on The Road Ahead –

Over the next five years, we will cut the following taxes to reward and encourage hard work, and to put money back into peoples' pockets:

- Complete our cut in provincial personal income taxes by January 1, 2004. For a typical Ontario family this will mean total tax savings of **\$2,575 a year** compared to 1995! (see box on next page – 'The Most Important Tax Cut')

- Give all Ontario homeowners an income tax break by allowing them to deduct mortgage interest costs from their taxable income. When fully implemented in five years, it will save homeowners with mortgages up to **\$500 per year** in provincial income tax (see box on next page – 'A Break for Homeowners')

- Eliminate the provincial portion of property taxes for seniors, saving the average seniors household **\$475 a year** (see box on next page – 'Giving Seniors a Break', and The Road Ahead policy paper on 'Supporting Ontario's Seniors')

- Eliminate the surtax for people earning up to \$75,000 per year by January 1, 2005

- Provide \$50 million in tax credits for disabled people and for family caregivers who are supporting disabled or elderly family members. This will mean an average annual savings of \$300 for family caregivers (see our policy paper on 'Providing a Hand Up')

- Put the Equity in Education Tax Credit in place faster, to help parents who send their children to independent schools

- Remove another 45,000 low- and moderate-income earners from Ontario's income tax roll, bringing to 825,000 the number of people who will not pay Ontario income tax at all

- Rebate the provincial sales tax on energy efficient appliances and light bulbs to help encourage conservation (see our policy paper on 'Providing Reliable, Affordable, Sustainable Energy')

The Most Important Tax Cut

We're proud to have given working Ontarians a major break on the most significant tax in their lives – income tax. When our next cut (20% by January 1, 2004) is completed, we will have slashed the provincial portion of personal income tax greatly since coming to office in 1995! For a typical Ontario family earning \$60,000, this will mean tax savings of **\$2575** per year compared to 1995...money that they can save, invest, or spend on their family's priorities.

Since 1995, we have also been reducing the impact of the surtax on working Ontarians. By the time we raise the surtax limit to \$75,000 on January 1, 2005, we will have put \$105 million back into the hands of middle class Ontarians.

A Break For Homeowners

Owning their own home remains the 'Canadian dream' for most Ontarians, and a home mortgage is the largest debt most people will ever have. Our historic mortgage interest tax deduction will help more Ontarians realize their dreams and better handle their mortgage expenses.

The deduction will be limited to the first \$5,000 of mortgage interest paid, so that this tax break will have its greatest impact on moderate-income families. We will phase in the deduction over five years. Once fully implemented, homeowners will be able to deduct up to \$5,000 in mortgage interest payments from their taxable incomes, resulting in provincial income tax savings of up to **\$500 per year**.

Giving Seniors A Break

After a lifetime of contributing to society, seniors deserve support in being able to stay in their own homes. We will eliminate the provincial portion of property taxes for seniors (about 25% of the average bill) as of July 1, 2003 – a \$450 million tax break!

For the average senior household in Ontario, this will mean **an annual saving of \$475**. We are also exempting life leases sponsored by registered charities or non-profit organizations from land transfer taxes.

Over the next five years, we will also cut the following taxes to help create more jobs and stimulate economic growth:

- Corporate income taxes on the smaller businesses that create most of our new jobs will be reduced to 5% in 2004 and 4% in 2005
- The corporate income tax rate for manufacturing and processing firms will be cut to 10% for 2004, 9% for 2005 and 8% for 2006
- We will reduce the general corporate income tax rate to 11% for 2004, 9.5% for 2005 and 8% for 2006
- The capital tax on employers will be cut 10% next year, as part of our plan to scrap this tax entirely
- Companies or farmers that invest in generating their own electricity through alternative or renewable energy sources will get breaks on their corporate income tax, property tax, sales tax and capital tax (see our policy paper on 'Providing Reliable, Affordable, Sustainable Energy')

Encouraging Job Creation

With more than 1 million new jobs (an average of 405 new jobs a day) since September, 1995, we've proven that tax cuts help create jobs. Our tax cuts over the next five years will have a direct, positive impact on employers who employ millions of Ontarians, stimulating them to expand their operations, as well as encouraging businesses, entrepreneurs and investors from outside of Ontario to bring more jobs to our province.

More Taxpayer Protection

We were proud to create the *Taxpayer Protection Act*, which prohibits the provincial government from increasing your overall tax burden without getting your permission through a referendum or election.

Now, we will extend that protection to your municipal taxes as well. Whatever municipality you live in, ***your local government will not be able to introduce a new tax or hike an existing one without the permission of the majority of voters.***

While decisions about local taxes should be made by the people who live in the municipality, municipal leaders have also been asking for greater flexibility in generating the revenue to meet the needs

of their residents. So, we are offering a 'Fair Deal for Municipalities'. (For details, see our 'Fair Deal' policy paper)

We will allow them to propose new local taxes on gasoline, hotel/motel rooms and parking to raise money for a specific local project or program. However, the proposed taxes must be approved in a referendum by a majority of voters in the municipality and can only be spent on the specified project.

Under our 'Fair Deal' arrangement, we will also purchase and take responsibility for municipal bridges in Ontario, ensuring these vital links between communities are properly maintained. This is especially important in rural Ontario.

Good Fiscal Management

We have turned the finances of the Ontario government around. In 1995, Ontario faced a deficit approaching \$11 billion and suffered a million dollars an hour in increasing debt. In 2003, we have brought in our FIFTH balanced budget in a row (for the first time in nearly a hundred years) and have made significant payments along the way to reduce the province's debt and maintain our credit rating.

This is the result of sound, prudent management of the public purse, and the stimulating effect of tax cuts on the economy. We have balanced the need to invest in programs with the need to keep our economy strong through competitive tax rates. Although Dalton McGuinty's Liberals claimed that cutting taxes would cost Ontario money, we have cut taxes 225 times, and government revenue is up by \$16 billion, allowing us to increase spending on health care and education to record levels.

We will continue to provide good fiscal management to Ontario on The Road Ahead -

- We will keep the budget balanced, as we have for the last five years in a row.

The balanced budget law we introduced will automatically dock the pay of the Premier and Cabinet Ministers if the province runs a deficit! We're keeping the onus on politicians to maintain our government's record of good management, now and in the future.

- We will reduce the provincial debt by a further \$5 billion over the next five years. We've already paid down the overall debt by \$5 billion since the last election (twice as much as we had promised), saving Ontario taxpayers \$791 million a year in interest payments.

Eliminating Waste & Increasing Efficiency

We have worked hard to get spending under control, to reduce the size of the bureaucracy and to eliminate waste in government, but there is still more to do. In fact, the job of being as efficient as possible never ends, as we keep learning how to better meet challenges, adapt new technologies and adopt good ideas.

Waste Gone and Dollars Saved

Since 1995, we have saved hundreds of millions of dollars for taxpayers by finding and eliminating the fat in government programs. Some of our accomplishments, and the taxpayer dollars saved, include:

Reducing the number of MPPs from 130 to 103	\$55 million a year
Eliminating corporate welfare	\$90 million a year
Cracking down on welfare fraud	\$40 million a year
Switching to an electronic corporate filing system	\$3.5 million a year

We have also repealed more than 2,000 unneeded laws and regulations through the Red Tape Commission (see The Road Ahead policy paper on 'Better Government Service').

But there is still more to be done. Dalton McGuinty's Liberals don't believe that it's possible to find further savings in government — their solution is to hike your taxes. On the other hand, we believe that your taxes are high enough, and that we can always do more to root out wasteful spending and make government more productive and efficient.

On The Road Ahead, we will save at least **\$700** million a year (about a penny on the dollar) through measures such as the following –

- Freezing the size of the Ontario Public Service for at least two years. The Ontario Public Service is one of the most efficient in North America, having won numerous awards for good public service, including a 2002 Gold Award from the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management. We will hire new employees where required, but the overall size of the public service will NOT increase. We think government is already big enough to meet all of Ontario's needs.
- Appointing a Government Waste Elimination Task Force to find waste and inefficiency anywhere in government. This will include an anonymous e-mail/phone tip system where civil servants and others can report any instances of taxpayer money being wasted.

If the Task Force cannot find enough savings in a given year to cover its own expenses, it will be scrapped.

- Using public service expertise and inside knowledge. After all, the people in the best position to identify government waste and inefficiency are those who work there.

We will tap into the front lines of public service for ideas on saving money and improving service. If a government worker finds a practical way to cut costs without cutting corners or compromising quality, he or she will be entitled to share in the resulting savings. Employees who propose improvements to service, with no cost savings, will also be eligible for awards.

- Reducing our labour costs. We will cap the fees paid to government consultants the same way we already do with lawyers, and we will reduce the amount of overtime for the civil service (with exceptions for workers involved in public health and safety, such as jail guards, or for special services to the public).
- Zero-based budgeting. Each branch and agency of our government will have to re-justify every item in its budget every year, starting from zero. This prevents programs that are inefficient, wasteful or no longer needed from slipping through the cracks. After all, just because money was spent on a program last year doesn't mean more should be spent this time around.

- Provide all of Ontario's hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities and municipalities the certainty of their funding on a multi-year basis. Because government and its partners should be accountable, our approach will be to guarantee a minimum level of funding. Beyond that, the level of funding will be subject to economic growth, the level of federal government support and results to be achieved through greater accountability. Our government will reward excellence in Ontario's public services while remaining fiscally responsible.

- Selling unneeded government real estate and properties. Dalton McGuinty's Liberals objected when the Ontario Realty Corporation started selling off a stock of unnecessary real estate — including vacant lots and office buildings we no longer use.

We believe that government has more important priorities than spending your tax dollars on land it doesn't need.

Ontario owns a total of \$70 million worth of land that has already been declared surplus. A thorough review is sure to identify millions more that serves no useful purpose and can be sold.

Of course, we will sell these and other assets for the best possible return for taxpayers, and Crown land will continue to be protected for future generations.

The Road Ahead Policy Papers

Each of these documents contains our detailed policies for building a better Ontario in one of 18 key areas. You'll find the complete contents of these papers on our website at www.ontariopc.com Free paper copies are available simply by calling us toll-free at 1-866-822-EVES (3837).

#1 - Keeping Our Economy Strong

Includes tax cuts to help create jobs...balanced budgets...paying down Ontario's debt...cutting waste and improving efficiency

#2 - Better Health Care for You and Your Family

Includes more doctors, nurses and hospitals...shorter waiting times...accountability to patients and taxpayers...investments in priority services

#3 - Helping Students Achieve Success

Includes mandatory literacy...phonics-based reading...no strikes during the school year...school report cards...outside expert volunteers...more choice for parents

#4 - Providing Advanced Education

Includes a place for every student...quality assurance funding...more student assistance...more new schools...apprenticeship growth...high school co-op

#5 - Safe Communities in a Secure Ontario

Includes new rights for victims...more police on our streets...tough action on crime...securing our border...consumer protection

#6 - Safeguarding the Natural Environment

Includes clean air...clean water...Ontario's Living Legacy

#7 - Helping Families and Children

Includes a Minister for Human Development...helping families cope...early childhood development...investing in children's health...fighting child exploitation

#8 - Supporting Ontario's Seniors

Includes a break on property taxes...investments in health care...support for caregivers...support for working seniors

#9 - Reliable, Affordable, Sustainable Energy

Includes protecting consumers...building the supply...using clean energy...promoting conservation

#10 - Smart Growth in Ontario

Includes the highways and transit we need...the cities and towns we want...environmental responsibility...fighting GTA gridlock

#11 - A Fair Deal for Municipalities

Includes a stronger voice...flexible revenue sources...more accountability

#12 - The Road Ahead for Rural Ontario

Includes better health care...support for schools...support for farmers...preserving our rural heritage

**#13 - *The Road Ahead
for Northern Ontario***

Includes a stronger voice...a stronger economy...
better health care...support for schools...safe
communities

#14 - *Providing a Hand Up*

Includes more accountability...more benefits to the
disabled...responsible care for the homeless

#15 - *A Passport to Ontario*

Includes a made-for-Ontario immigration
system...better security at our border...the skilled
people we need...fighting fraud and abuse

#16 - *Better Government Service*

Includes service where and when you need it...
effective regulation, less red tape

#17 - *A Stronger Democracy for Ontario*

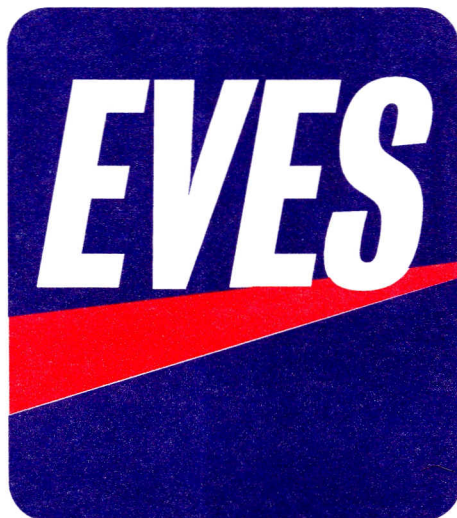
Includes more public input...parliamentary reform...
more independence for MPPs...opening up the
budget

#18 - *A Workers' Bill of Rights*

Includes a stronger voice for workers...access to
union information



THE ROAD AHEAD



EXPERIENCE.
STRENGTH.
LEADERSHIP.

The Ontario PC Party

Toll Free: 1-866-822-EVES Fax: 416-861-9593

120-2020 Adelaide Street West, Toronto, ON M5H 1T1

www.OntarioPC.com E-mail: questions@OntarioPC.com

Authorized by the C.F.O. of the Ontario PC Party



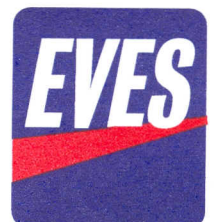
EXPERIENCE FOR THE ROAD AHEAD.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

BETTER HEALTH CARE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

*More Doctors
More Nurses
More Hospitals
Shorter Waiting Times
Accountability to Patients
Investing in Priority Services*



Better Health Care for You and Your Family

We all need the security of knowing that if any of our family members require health care, it will be available when and where they need it.

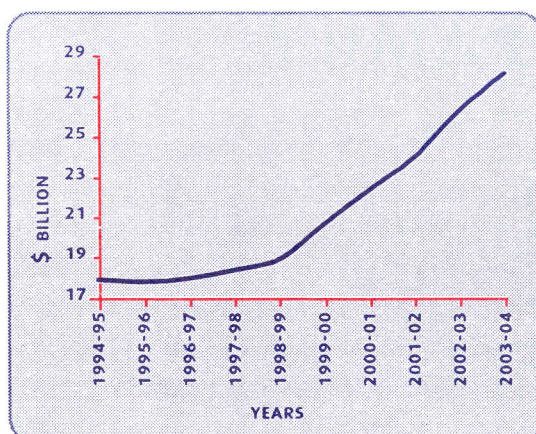
Universal access to excellent health care is one of the most important measures of the quality of people's lives, and the most essential service government can provide is a world-class, publicly-funded

health care system. That's why our plan includes a commitment to guarantee health care funding at record high levels.

Ontario's Fair Share

Despite what Dalton McGuinty's Liberals would like you to believe, we have increased health care funding in Ontario by leaps and bounds. In fact, we have invested record levels of money in health care every year since 1995.

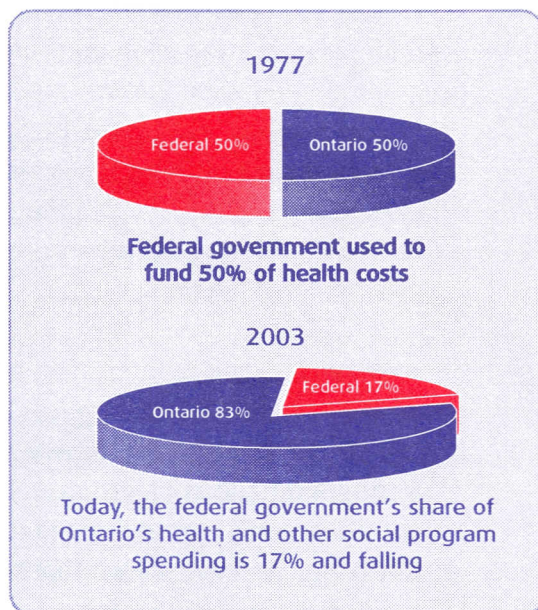
ONTARIO'S HEALTH SPENDING, 1994-95 TO 2003-04



Altogether, we've increased annual funding by \$10 billion, despite the continuing lack of fair health care funding from the federal Liberals. Ottawa used to match Ontario's spending on health

care—it was a fifty-fifty proposition. Now, they fund only 17 cents of each health care dollar Ontario spends, and this share will decline even further next year.

DECLINING FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR HEALTH AND OTHER SOCIAL PROGRAMS



Dalton McGuinty's Liberals are not prepared to tackle their federal cousins to stop health care under-funding. We are. We will continue to fight for Ontarians until Ottawa restores its support of health care to a fair share.

In the meantime, we pledge to continue providing the health care funding and quality the people of Ontario need, with or without Ottawa's help.

We will invest \$28 billion into health care this year, almost half the total provincial budget, to meet the needs of our growing and aging population, and the demands for new and more expensive drugs and medical technologies. Thanks to the strength of our economy, we are able to afford these massive extra investments without raising taxes or borrowing more money (and even without fair funding from the federal government).

However, adequate funding is just the beginning of quality health care. Providing better health care for you and your family means providing a better SYSTEM of health care, one that is more accountable and efficient.

An Ontario Health Quality Auditor will make sure that funding is being spent wisely to improve access and quality. We will measure the success of our health care system by its results ... by the wait-

ing times for services, the health of our people, and the access you have to doctors, nurses, hospitals and new health care technology.

Our plan to create a better health care system, one that provides better services to Ontarians, includes the following commitments:

- More doctors to serve Ontario's families
- More nurses to provide front-line health care to Ontarians
- More hospitals to meet the growing needs of our population
- Shorter waiting times for the health care you and your family need most
- Accountability to the public for providing service where and when you need it, and for how public money is spent
- New investments in priority health care services

More Doctors

After years of neglect under the previous government, which cut back on medical school enrolment and reduced the number of specialists in Ontario, we have made real progress in undoing the damage. Our programs to train and recruit more doctors have helped ease the shortages of specialists, we are attracting more doctors to under-served areas, and enrolment in medical schools is increasing by 30%!

However, there is still work to be done. The major challenge for our health care system now is access to family physicians. Every family in Ontario deserves access to a good family doctor, and we will take decisive action to meet this challenge on The Road Ahead -

- We will increase access for international medical graduates, bringing 650 more physicians into practice over the next five years.

We will also increase the number of fully trained doctors coming to practise in Ontario. Our "Passport to Ontario" immigration policy (see our policy paper on 'Passport to Ontario') will place high priority on the recruitment of qualified foreign doctors, and we will ensure that qualified, competent foreign physicians with equivalent (or better) credentials face no barriers to practising in Ontario.

- We will help meet the need for doctors in under-served areas and in primary care family practice.

- Medical students who agree to practise in under-served areas upon graduation will be granted free tuition through medical school

- Medical students who choose to go into primary care family practice anywhere in the province will have their tuition costs repaid (or forgiven, if they used our student loan program)

- We are building Ontario's first medical school in 30 years to increase medical student enrolment. The school is being built on two campuses in Northern Ontario in order to create a pool of new physicians with experience and roots in the North. Studies have shown that most doctors will practise where they trained.

- We have made Ontario the national leader in reforming primary care - the front line of family medical care. Through our Family Health Networks, we are bringing family doctors together as teams that can provide 24/7 access to care for Ontario families. We are expanding that program to include more physicians in more communities to help make sure that health care is available to you and your family where and when you need it.

More Nurses

Nurses are key to the success of our health care system. They are the front line in the ongoing challenge to provide universal access to world-class care.

That's why we hired 12,000 more nurses across Ontario since 1997, created a new Bachelor of Nursing degree, and will have created another 750 nurse practitioner positions by 2005.

Recognizing the value of these health professionals, we must and will do more to improve Ontarians' access to nursing care on The Road Ahead:

- We are creating another 8,000 new positions for nurses who will graduate within the next three years, and hiring 1,000 additional nurse practitioners over the next five years.
- Hundreds of small communities in Ontario may not have a local physician right now, but can have access to nurse practitioners. These health care professionals can meet up to 85% of the primary health care needs of most patients. We will expand their authority even more, empowering nurse practitioners to make referrals to specialists and to admit patients to hospitals.

This will help increase access to services and reduce waiting times in many parts of Ontario, as well as recognizing the abilities of our province's well-educated nursing professionals.

- We will use the same successful program directed at doctors to help get more nurses into remote and rural parts of Ontario. Nursing students who are willing to work in under-served areas upon graduation will be offered free tuition.

- We will establish a province-wide placement system to match nurses to vacancies and offer updated information on opportunities on the Internet. The goal will be a full-time position for every nurse who wants one.

- We will implement an aggressive nurse recruitment and retention policy to get and keep nursing professionals training and working here in Ontario.

- We will aggressively recruit for nurses around the world. Our "Passport to Ontario" immigration policy will make trained nurses a priority class of immigrant.
- When other jurisdictions hold recruitment forums to try to take our nurses away, we will challenge them directly -- with our own recruitment program to talk to nurses about the opportunities and advantages here in Ontario.
- We will work with nursing organizations, health care providers and educators to continue to expand and improve nursing recruitment and education here in Ontario. We should be attracting the top young people to this profession, giving them a world-class education, and matching them to the best opportunities in our province.

Shorter Waits

Excellent health care is no use if you can't access it. We will build a health care system that GUARANTEES you treatment when you need it.

- Our government has already slashed the waiting times for MRI and CT scans in Ontario, nearly

tripling the numbers of these advanced machines from only 57 to 151 in the past eight years.

Now, we will make these modern treatments even more accessible by providing 40 more MRI machines and 50 more CT scanners at clinics and hospitals across Ontario over the next five years.

The Liberal Plan to CLOSE Labs and Clinics

Many people would be surprised to know that the private sector provides more than a third of health care services in Ontario. From kidney dialysis to blood tests, private-sector operations help provide more access to services at often lower costs to taxpayers, all within the publicly funded health care system. It's a practical arrangement that has existed for decades.

Regardless of who owns a clinic or operates a diagnostic machine, we know that the most important things to you are access to the services you need and public funding for that service. That's why we are ready to work with the private sector to provide greater access to MRI and CT scanners across Ontario.

Unbelievably, as Ontarians demand shorter waiting times for these important diagnostic tools, Dalton McGuinty's Liberals are promising to cancel these plans and dis-

mantle the current system. This would effectively CLOSE DOWN all of the private MRI and CT scanning labs in Ontario, and could threaten X-ray clinics, blood labs, mammograms and other important medical services.

Communities where Dalton McGuinty's policy would close clinics with CT scanners:

Huntsville
Ajax
Mississauga
Thunder Bay

Communities where Dalton McGuinty's policy would close clinics with MRI machines:

Kingston
Vaughan
Kitchener
Ajax
Mississauga

- We have already built a province-wide, computerized cardiac care network that has reduced the wait time for cardiac surgery in half since 1996. As the next step, we will have medical experts identify acceptable treatment times for other procedures, starting with general surgery, cataract surgery, cancer treatment, hip and knee replacement and MRIs.

Once those medically accepted time limits have been established, we will **guarantee** that each patient will receive treatment within that time. The limits will be standardized province-wide, so patients in rural and Northern Ontario have the same protection as those in cities. In rare cases, if

timely treatment cannot be delivered inside Ontario, then out-of-province care will be provided at no cost to the patient.

By making this a priority program, the first of our guaranteed waiting times, for cardiac care, will be in place by 2005.

- Waiting for medical care, especially in an emergency, is a potentially dangerous and very frustrating experience. That's why we have taken effective action to reduce waiting times during emergencies (see box below).

Emergency Health Care When You Need It

We have made major investments to help reduce waiting times for Ontarians during emergencies:

- Since 1998, we've invested more than \$750 million to improve access to hospital emergency rooms across the province while providing the flexibility to anticipate and respond to peak periods of activity
- We have expanded emergency room capacity in Ontario hospitals by nearly two million patient visits, from 3.5 million to 5.4 million per year
- We invested \$90 million over four years beginning in 1999 for additional emergency and critical beds in Toronto, Hamilton, London and Ottawa, as well as improving discharge capabilities at 15 hos-

pitals across the province

- We made \$208 million available for alternative funding arrangements with hospitals to ensure physician coverage in the ER
- \$117 million a year for Community Health Centres that provide alternatives to hospital emergency rooms during off-hours
- \$224 million for ambulance services (since 2000, we have added 150 ambulances and 40 emergency response vehicles to the system)
- \$126 million for our influenza vaccination program – the only one of its kind in North America – helping reduce the demand for emergency services during flu season

However, we recognize that ANY time waiting in a hospital emergency room feels like too long. People in more rural parts of the province still face long travel times, even in an ambulance, during an emergency. There is more to do to meet this important challenge.

Our commitments elsewhere in this section to build more hospitals where they are needed, to train and recruit more doctors and nurses, and to provide more nurse practitioners (allowed to provide a greater range of services) will help further ease waiting times during emergencies.

- We will also make the most of the investments already in place. We will require hospitals to use all funding provided specifically for emergency rooms DIRECTLY for that purpose. That money is intended to help meet a priority for Ontarians, not for other hospital projects.

- While there is more that government can do, patients can also make an important contribution by not using the emergency room as a doctor's office. Use of the ER should be restricted to emergencies, not just for convenience. We have introduced Telehealth Ontario to help patients determine what is and isn't an emergency. Since February 1, 2001, more than 1.5 million people have dialled 1-866-797-0000 to ask for medical advice. In 85% of cases, callers have been directed to a solution other than a hospital emergency room. We will continue to urge all Ontarians to use Telehealth, their own doctors, community health networks and walk-in clinics as alternatives to hospital emergency rooms.

- Our government is committed to investing in the priority health care services that Ontarians and medical experts have told us are most important right now:

- We will create an expert task force to put together an Infectious Diseases Emergency Plan for Ontario, so that we are ready to handle outbreaks of serious diseases such as SARS and the West Nile Virus. In the meantime, our SARS Assistance and Recovery Strategy will help overcome the impact of SARS on Ontarians and their businesses, and we will spend \$100 million over the next five years to fight West Nile and help keep Ontarians safe.
- We will invest \$1 billion to create an institute dedicated to finding cures for prostate and breast cancer (see box on next page).
- We will invest \$250 million over five years to reform mental health care, including children's mental health (see box on next page).
- We will target extra funding to the treatment of cataracts (\$10 million) and osteoporosis (\$7 million).
- We will improve access to hip and knee replacement surgery and to arthritis care.
- We will extend OHIP funding to cover the most common test for prostate cancer.
- We will create a Children's Health Network, linking all of the children's hospitals across Ontario to share resources, knowledge and capabilities to provide the best possible health care for our children.
- To support the health care needs of children in the north, we will invest nearly \$6.5 million to support the Electronic Child Health Network North, providing an electronic link between health care professionals and families in the north, and hundreds of pediatricians and health care professionals in southern Ontario.

Working Towards Cures For Prostate and Breast Cancer

After decades of effort, science is very close to cracking the cancer challenge and developing effective treatments for a wide range of these diseases. We want to help put this vital effort over the top.

As the late Dr. Charles Hollenberg, world renowned cancer researcher and former head of Cancer Care Ontario said, "Finding a cure for breast and prostate cancer can be done. It just takes leadership."

Over the next decade, we will invest \$1 billion in the Cancer Research Institute of Ontario to help find cures for prostate and breast cancer. We will create a world-class facility that will attract top researchers from around the world, as well as keeping our best and brightest here in Ontario. The Institute will be given the challenge of playing a leading role in the global effort to find cures for cancer.

Meeting the Mental Health Care Challenge

An estimated 20% of Ontarians will suffer from mental illness at some point in their lives – affecting their health, jobs, families and communities. That's why we're investing \$250 million over the next five years to reform mental health care to better meet this challenge. This will include:

- A public education campaign to build awareness and understanding, and to combat the stigma of mental illness,

- A Premier's Council on Mental Health to raise the profile of this challenge, address key challenges and monitor progress,
- Expanding early intervention and prevention services across the province,
- Supporting community activities such as self-help support services, and
- Creating a centre of excellence for Children's Mental Health at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (see our policy paper on 'Helping Families and Children').

SMARTRISK

SMARTRISK has developed province-wide strategies to strengthen the impact of injury prevention efforts through research, program support and development, information sharing, education and social marketing.

We have invested \$5 million in a partnership with SMART RISK to develop a provincial injury prevention strategy.

Responsible Care for the Homeless

Our significant investments in mental health and addiction treatment services are only part of the solution. In order to be truly effective and compassionate, we have to make sure that those who require care and support are actually receiving it.

To help reach out to these people in need, we will increase our funding of the Shared Care Teams (teams of outreach workers, nurses and physicians supported by psychiatrists) that bring health and mental health services to homeless people.

Shared Care teams will be directed to make sure that people without a place to stay get the care they need, whether it's medical attention, addiction treatment or a shelter bed. When cold weather alerts are issued in Ontario communities, people living on the streets **MUST** be provided with adequate shelter and should not be allowed to sleep outdoors.

Legislation will give the Shared Care Teams the power to remove people from the streets and take them into care when, in the Teams' opinion, it is necessary for their protection. Allowing people to suffer frostbite or death by exposure is cruelty, not compassion. The police would be called in only as a last resort if necessary to protect the individual or members of the team.

Building More Hospitals, Faster

Innovative partnerships with the private sector are resulting in state-of-the-art hospitals being built or expanded across the province, including:

- William Osler Hospital
- Royal Ottawa Hospital
- Peterborough Regional Hospital
- Markham-Stouffville Hospital

More Hospitals

Ontario's health care challenges are always changing. Our growing population, increasing number of seniors, and growth in different areas of the province have renewed the need for building modern hospitals or renovating existing ones.

We will spend \$504 million this year building health care infrastructure, but it will be nowhere near enough to meet the demand for hospital facilities. We have found that partnering with the private sector allows us to build more hospitals, faster and at lower cost to meet the public need.

Here's how it works: the private sector builds the actual building. The hospital board then leases it from the builder. All of the health care services provided inside the hospital are publicly funded, just like any other hospital. The private sector takes the risks and puts the money up front, saving taxpayers money while getting the new hospital in place faster.

We will build even more new hospitals using similar financing methods on *The Road Ahead*, while always upholding the principles of public health care. These will be public hospitals governed by the *Canada Health Act*.

Unlike Dalton McGuinty's Liberals, we believe that it doesn't matter who owns the bricks and mortar of the building. What DOES matter is that the people inside the building are providing the very best health care services to the people of Ontario in a universally-accessible, publicly-funded system.

While McGuinty and the Liberals would have to borrow the money or raise taxes to build more hospitals, or simply not build them at all, we will be able to meet the needs of Ontarians with practical partnerships.

Investing Where It Matters Most

The massive funding increases for health care under our government have resulted in real, measurable improvements in health care services for Ontarians, such as –

- We have reduced the average length of stay for total joint replacement procedures – by 29% for hip replacements and 33% for knee replacements
- We have quadrupled the number of MRI machines and doubled the number of CT scanners in Ontario
- We provide breast screening for nearly 170,000 Ontario women each year, having more than doubled the number of screening sites across the province
- We have increased cardiac centres in hospitals by one-third, expanding access to

services closer to home. Since 1995, an additional 69,662 cardiac procedures have been performed and waiting times are down by 53%.

- We committed \$250 million to build an accessible, integrated and dependable family health system. Ontario is the only province to have implemented family health networks—24-hour a day, seven day a week access to family doctors and other health professionals.
- The Ontario Drug Benefit Program now includes 1,436 new drug products added since 1995, and our 2003 budget announced another \$200 million to cover higher demands on the program.

More Accountability to Patients

In 1995, annual health care spending was \$17.4 billion. Today it is \$28 billion, and will grow to at least \$30 billion in the next five years. This is a massive amount of money – nearly half the provincial budget – and it's our responsibility to make sure these taxpayer dollars are being spent efficiently and effectively.

While the amount of money spent on health care is vital, it is not the most important measure of our success. What matters most are the outcomes: how much healthier people are, how long patients wait for medical services, and how well their needs are met.

We will continue to measure our success in health care by its impact on Ontario families. Our plan is to make the health care system more accountable to you, the patient:

- We will commit funding for hospitals on a three-year basis, allowing hospital administrators to plan in advance for the public's needs. Increases in funding will be based on economic growth, federal funding contributions and, above all, the hospital's performance.

Funding will be based on the real world challenges each hospital is facing – how many patients it is expected to treat and the number and complexity of the procedures it will perform – and how well it

is meeting those challenges, including patient satisfaction and the success of patient treatments.

As part of our reforms, hospitals will be prohibited from diverting funding from its intended target. For example, money provided to expand an emergency room must be spent only for that purpose.

- It is too difficult and complex now for patients who want to make a complaint or suggestion about our health care system. The process should be transparent, fast and user-friendly. We will make it easier to access the system by using our toll-free Telehealth Ontario service. One phone call will direct you to the right person or organization to hear your idea or problem.
- Parents of children with special needs deserve more control over the care their loved ones receive. We will provide provincial support directly to them, rather than to agencies. That way parents can choose the care that best suits their children. At the same time, we will ensure that services continue to be available in all parts of Ontario.
- We are already creating a new College of Traditional Chinese Medicine to help meet the demands of patients who use this alternative therapy. Now, we will work with the College and health care professionals to determine what role their alternative therapies should play in an integrated health care system.

Eliminating Waste and Fighting Fraud

We are spending more on health care than ever before in Ontario's history. It only makes sense that we take extra care to ensure that the money actually goes to services for patients.

- We will appoint an ***Ontario Health Quality Auditor***, with a mandate to ensure that money intended for patient care is being well spent.

The Auditor and team will be empowered to identify waste and inefficiency at hospitals, nursing homes and other health institutions. They will also have the mandate to ensure that special-purpose funding is actually used as intended, for example that funding to reduce emergency room waiting times, expand a clinic or buy a new diagnostic machine is not used for other purposes.

Savings that result from the audits will be reinvested in patient services.

- We will crack down on OHIP cheats. It will become an offence to present a false OHIP card. We will revoke the OHIP billing privileges of any doctor convicted of criminal fraud. Money stolen by those who cheat comes at the expense of those who are truly in need.

- We will deny OHIP coverage to people who are awaiting deportation or are otherwise in Canada illegally. The federal government will have to pay for health care services for the people it has allowed into the country. Ontario's law-abiding citizens won't have to subsidize those who refuse to play by the rules.



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

HELPING STUDENTS ACHIEVE SUCCESS

*No Diploma If You Can't Read and Write
Phonics-Based Reading
No Strikes During the School Year
School Report Cards
Outside Experts Helping Students
More Choice for Parents*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



An Equal Opportunity For Success

Today, more than ever before, our children's future success and ability to pursue their personal dreams will depend on the quality of their education.

Every child should have an equal opportunity for success and be given the tools he or she will need to reach their full potential.

In 1995, we inherited an education system that was failing students and parents, and we turned it around by focusing on high standards and measurable results. We boosted funding to record levels, shared it fairly with students in every part of Ontario and focused our resources on the classroom, where it matters most. It wasn't easy reforming the education system, but it worked.

Now, Ontario stands at a crossroads. Dalton McGuinty's Liberals would take us back to inequality and the failed systems of no standards, no tests and no accountability.

On the other hand, we intend to move forward: to help students achieve success by building on our reforms, and by holding our schools and school boards accountable to deliver results.

Our plan to help students achieve success and make the system more accountable to parents and taxpayers on The Road Ahead includes the following commitments:

- An Ontario Education Quality Auditor who will help make the education system more accountable to parents and taxpayers
- Clear school report cards that will allow you to compare school performance
- Allowing the use of outside experts to coach or lead extracurricular activities and support teachers (with rigorous background checks)
- More choice for parents to send their children to schools that best meet their needs
- High school students who cannot read and write in English or French will not graduate.
- Increased support for literacy and education quality, including phonics-based reading instruction
- No strikes, lock-outs or work-to-rule during the school year

Putting Students First

We've made historic reforms of the education system in order to put students first. Our actions included:

- Introducing standardized province-wide tests to measure how well students were learning, to compare results and performance, and to find those who needed extra help to succeed
- Creating clear report cards so that parents can understand how their children are doing in school
- Requiring teachers to meet high standards as well, with mandatory testing of their knowledge, and requirements to keep upgrading their skills
- Putting resources towards students, instead of the education bureaucracy. The amount of money paid to consultants and bureaucrats was reduced, while the amount spent inside the classroom was increased
- Boosting our investment in education to \$16.2 billion a year, the highest in Ontario history
- Introducing a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum, with clear year-by-year expectations in core subjects and basic skills, leading to advanced knowledge and abilities

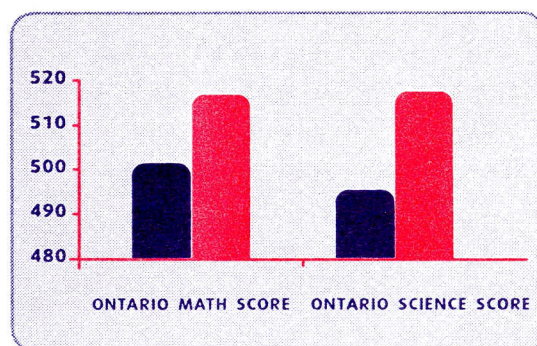
Our Reforms Are Working

Putting students first is paying off:

- Recent international literacy test scores show Ontario in the top five, ahead of jurisdictions such as the United States, Germany and Singapore.
- International math and science tests show Ontario improved significantly between 1995 and 1999, moving ahead of England and the U.S.
- Provincial Grade 3 math test scores have increased by over 35% since 1998.
- High school students taking the new four-year program are graduating in record numbers, well prepared for post-secondary destinations, their next important steps.

Our young people will be better able to compete for jobs and fulfill their personal dreams.

THIRD INTERNATIONAL MATH AND SCIENCE SURVEY RESULTS



- Ontario's students - 1995
- Ontario's students - 1999

Equal Funding for Students

It used to be that students in Toronto or Ottawa got more funding than those in small rural and Northern communities, just because big cities have more large businesses and corporate headquarters paying education property taxes. We made history by introducing funding that was equal for every student across Ontario. We changed that unequal system so that ALL Ontario students could get a good education, regardless of how much or little property tax their parents pay.

Urban or rural, north or south, public or separate, English or French – for the first time, all Ontario students now have equal funding and an equal opportunity to succeed.

Dalton McGuinty's Liberals voted against equal funding and want to return to the old system. The recent Rozanski Task Force spoke to 500 groups

Quality of Education

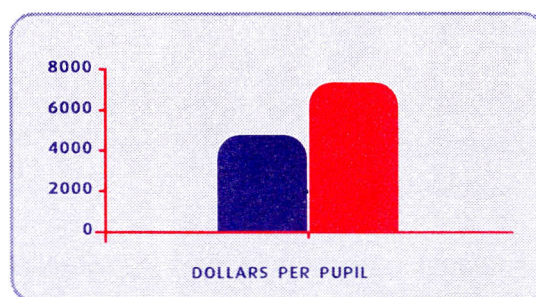
Last year, our government appointed Dr. Mordechai Rozanski to lead the Education Equality Task Force. He confirmed that the funding formula was working, that new investments were required to better support student learning, and that the education system must be more accountable to parents and taxpayers.

Following Dr. Rozanski's advice, we are increasing our annual investment in education by an additional \$2 billion to the highest level in Ontario's history—\$16.2 billion.

Since we introduced student-focused funding in 1998, 226 new schools and 291 additions will have created more than 200,000 new spaces for students in time for the 2003 school year. As a result, nearly

concerned about education across the province and heard loudly and clearly that per-pupil funding works—people don't want to go back to the old days of unfair funding and high local taxes.

PER PUPIL FUNDING BEFORE OUR STUDENT-FOCUSED FUNDING FORMULA



- Ontario's least affluent rural school boards - \$4,800
- Ontario's most affluent urban school boards - \$7,500

two thousand portable classrooms will have been removed from the system.

However, we will do even more to ensure quality of education on The Road Ahead:

- ***Under an Ernie Eves government, high school students who cannot read and write in English or French will not graduate.***

We agree with parents that test results matter. We also believe that no student should receive a high school diploma without being able to read and write in one of Canada's two official languages. That's why we introduced the high school literacy test—to make sure no graduate lacks these basic skills. We will provide generous remedial help to those who fail the test but, ultimately, a student must prove his or her literacy in order to graduate.

New Investments in Education Quality

Since the release of the report of the Education Equality Task Force in December 2002, we have announced investments of \$895 million to help students succeed and achieve their full potential in school, including:

- \$149 million to renovate existing schools across the province, build new schools where required, and to help keep small, rural, and Northern schools open
- \$66 million to provide Ontario children with more computers in the classroom, more up-to-date textbooks and more learning materials
- \$50 million for student literacy and workplace preparation
- \$250 million more per year for special education, a permanent increase of 18 %. (We will be providing approximately \$1.6 billion per year for special education — more than any other government in Ontario's history.)
- \$340 million for school boards to meet the salary demands of teachers (this represents a 3% increase in the salary benchmarks in the funding formula)
- \$20 million to help school boards meet transportation needs

Graduate in Ontario by Achieving Literacy Standards (GOALS)

We created the GOALS strategy for students who need extra help in reading, writing and math and in their transition from school to the workplace. The investment of \$50 million in the GOALS strategy includes new resources and initiatives to help students succeed:

- Students-at-risk leaders will work with Grade 7 to 12 teachers to implement improved teaching methods for students in literacy and math across the curriculum;
- Enhancing workplace preparation programs; and
- Better pathways for the transition from

school to the workplace, remedial programs and flexible school timetables to help students achieve their goals.

In addition, a comprehensive, full credit literacy course, (equivalent to the components of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test) will be offered to students in Grade 12 who have failed the test. The course is designed to help students who have not had the full benefit of the new curriculum that includes a strong focus on reading and writing in the early years.

All students must pass either the literacy test or the literacy course to receive their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

- We agree with parents that providing children with a good education is as essential as providing them with medical care. Children should not be made to suffer because of labour disputes, or become pawns in power struggles between school boards, unions and government.

While we have increased teachers' salaries, and will continue to provide funding for fair pay increases, we expect teachers and school boards to join us in putting students first.

We will pass legislation making it **illegal** for teachers (and other school employees) to strike, and for school boards to lock out their employees, during the school year. School boards and unions will be required to resolve their differences during the summer months.

The same law will make "work-to-rule" campaigns illegal during the school year. Parents know that these job actions, such as a union's refusal to allow teachers to write comments on report cards, can be as harmful to their children's education as a full-fledged strike.

- When it comes to literacy, many parents and educators believe that phonics-based reading delivers the best results. For example, Centennial Public School in Cambridge introduced a phonics program

to improve its students' reading skills. Within one year, tests showed that the number of boys reading at the provincial standard had skyrocketed from 0% to 75%.

We will require that phonics tools be available for all teachers in all schools, so that they can use the best methods for their students. We will also work with faculties of education to ensure that graduating teachers know how to teach both the phonics and whole language methods.

- Students should not be deprived of extra curricular activities such as sports because of union or school board rules against bringing in non-teachers as volunteers or expert instructors. We will pass legislation allowing outside experts to run a club, coach sports and lead other extra curricular activities. For example, musicians could lead a band and actors could mentor a drama club.

At the same time, we'll encourage school boards to use outside experts to supplement the work of certified teachers in Ontario classrooms, and make it easier for them to do so.

We will create certification and standards for all outside experts, and require that they pass rigorous background checks before becoming volunteers or instructors.

Safe Schools

Students can't learn and teachers can't teach if they don't feel safe. We've given educators the tools they need to deal with inappropriate behaviour through the *Safe Schools Act* and the *Student Protection Act*.

- Principals and teachers have new powers to deal with threats to student safety;

- School boards can immediately remove from the classroom any teacher who poses a threat to students; and

- Students face specific consequences for their actions. Fully expelled students must successfully complete a strict discipline program to earn their way back into school.

Attracting New Teachers

We have expanded the faculties of education in Ontario to meet the need for teachers. From 1999 to 2003, 6,000 new spaces for teaching students were created, a 24 % increase over the previous five years. We are also working with the Ontario Teachers' Federation to attract teachers in high-demand areas such as math, science and French.

- Ontario is blessed with many talented and dedicated teachers who work tirelessly to help our students achieve success. We will create two awards: an **Award for Teacher Excellence** and an **Award for Principal Excellence** to recognize the teacher and principal in each district who represent the best qualities of these important professions.

Nominations will be accepted from students and parents, and the awards given annually.

- A good teacher possesses not just excellent teaching skills but also strong knowledge of the subject being taught. Despite the importance of math, just one per cent of Ontario's elementary school teachers are specialists in mathematics. To increase the number of specialist math teachers, we will offer provincial scholarships to current elementary school teachers who upgrade their skills by earning specialist certification in math.
- We agree with educators who say that our system of requiring teachers to meet high standards for knowledge and skills should reflect 'real world'

teaching abilities in the classroom. So, we will increase the resources available for provincial education inspectors and direct them to frequently drop into classrooms unannounced to evaluate teacher performance. The inspectors will also be able to use an unannounced inspection to respond to parental concerns over the abilities of a teacher. All teachers will be subject to spot visits and performance evaluations by these inspectors.

- Modern technology can link our students with powerful sources of information and skills development, help expand access to education and give our youth more opportunities to learn how to use this technology for lifelong learning.

At the end of the day, however, technology must be used, and shown, to help students to learn. For example, today's students need to know how to use the Internet for research as much as traditional resources like the library. But a computer program can never be a substitute for ensuring that every child has mastered the basics such as spelling and math.

Teaching The Basics

- Even the most advanced education has to have a firm foundation in the basics. However, we reject the simplistic approach of Dalton McGuinty's Liberals to require a minimum time for reading each day.

Simply demanding that students read, without measuring the effects on their abilities or helping those who need it, is no solution to the complex challenge of providing a solid grounding in basic skills and knowledge.

If you are serious about basic skills such as literacy, you have to do what we have done here in Ontario:

- Make literacy and numeracy the core elements in a rigorous new curriculum
- Test what you teach, to make sure that the students are learning it

- Ensure that your teachers have up-to-date skills and knowledge

- Set standards for excellence and stick to them

- Require that students prove their literacy in order to graduate from high school

- Help those students who fail to meet the standards by providing extra resources for remedial education

Our reforms are improving the reading skills of Ontario students. Recent international literacy test scores show Ontario in the top five, ahead of jurisdictions such as the United States, Germany and Singapore. We're making sure that Ontario students know HOW to read, not just WHEN.

Accountability in Education

We're already spending more on education than ever before in the province's history. Now, it's time to demand RESULTS that are higher than ever before, and to require that the education system is spending public resources wisely and effectively – putting students first.

We will create a more accountable education system on The Road Ahead -

- We've already moved education funding from the bureaucracy to the classrooms, but we know there is more that can be done at the school board level to make sure that students get a larger share of that funding. Last year, the government sent auditors to check the books of three different school boards; the auditors found serious waste and mismanagement in all three boards examined. To address waste and mismanagement across the education system, allowing us to focus spending where it will help students succeed, we will appoint an **Ontario Education Quality Auditor**.

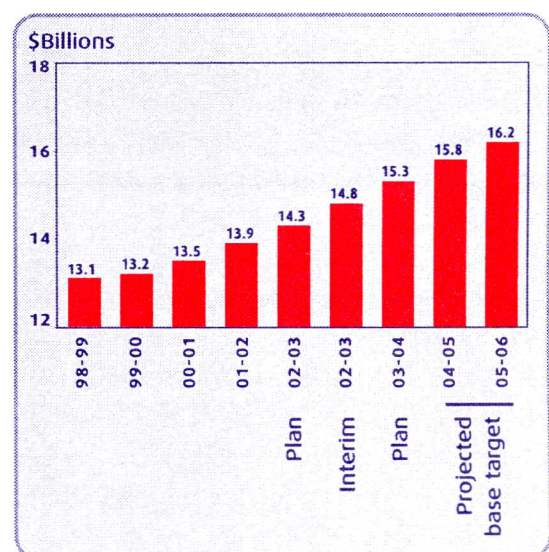
The Auditor and team will have the power to investigate how all school boards spend their money, and to require that wasteful or inefficient spending be eliminated. The resulting savings will be re-invested in the classroom.

- We will insist on financial accountability from school boards. Right now, the money we give to boards does not always get used for the intended purpose—helping students achieve success. We will require that school boards submit their spending plans in advance to show where taxpayer money will be going before they receive it. As well, when grants for things like textbooks and learning software are approved, the money will have to be spent ONLY on these items. The new Ontario Education Quality Auditor will help make sure taxpayer money is being spent wisely in education.

- Standardized testing is only useful if parents have access to the results so they can compare performance. We will require that every school board provide parents with an annual report on each of its schools, including staffing, salaries, enrolment, average test results and details of a plan to improve student performance. The government will post these **School Report Cards** (including average test results) on our own Education Ministry web site, allowing everyone in the province to hold schools accountable for results.

Another important measure of performance is how well schools prepare our children for post-secondary education. So, school boards will be required to work with post-secondary institutions to report on what percentages of Grade 9 students from each school go on to apprenticeships, to university and to college.

PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING
(SCHOOL YEAR)
MULTI-YEAR BASE FUNDING PROFILE



More Choice for Parents

Every child is unique and all deserve an equal opportunity to succeed and reach their highest potential. Parents have the right to decide what is best for their children and their families, and should be given the choice to meet their special needs or abilities.

We will give more choice to parents on The Road Ahead –

- Parents will be free to choose to send their children to any school within the jurisdiction of their local school board. We believe that parents and students should be free to compare results and choose the school that they feel will best help them achieve success.

Obviously, this system can only work if there is space at a school to accommodate extra students. Unlike Dalton McGuinty's Liberals, we will ensure that first priority is given to students living within each school's catchment area.

- We will expand the range of choices open to students and parents by supporting publicly-funded ***Innovation Schools*** within the public and separate school systems. Each Innovation School would operate within the current system, directly funded by government based on the number of students enrolled, but would offer unique programs or teaching.

The idea is not completely new. Schools such as Gordon Graydon IBT in Brampton (which specializes in business and technology) and Stamford Collegiate in Niagara Falls (which specializes in performing arts) offer unique approaches or emphasis on particular areas of education. Ontario also has accelerated program schools that graduate students in seven years, instead of eight.

Like them, Innovation Schools would be part of the school board and would always teach the core curriculum using certified teachers. However, in keeping with the school's innovative mandate, its principal, teachers and the parents who established the school would enjoy significant flexibility. Each Innovation School would succeed only through its ability to attract students.

- We will speed up and legislate the schedule for providing the Equity in Education Tax Credit. This tax break will help parents who choose to send their children to alternative schools, such as those with a strong religious, cultural or academic basis. The independent schools will be required to assess students in core subjects and tell parents how progress is being measured.

These parents still pay taxes like everyone else to support the publicly-funded system while also paying for their own children's education. The Tax Credit, when fully implemented, will save those parents up to \$3,500 per year in taxes. Most of all, parents will have more choice over the most important decision they will ever make: how their children are educated.

- School closures can have a major impact on smaller communities in Northern and rural Ontario, where parents may have no choice but to send their children to another community, sometimes a long distance away. We are investing \$50 million a year to help keep rural schools open for the benefit of students and parents in smaller communities. School Boards will be required to spend the money for this specific purpose only.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

PROVIDING ADVANCED EDUCATION

*A Place for Every Student
Funding Quality Education
More Student Assistance
Apprenticeship Growth
High School Co-op*



Post-Secondary Education

Whether it's college or university, an apprenticeship for a skilled trade or some other career-oriented training, the quality of post-secondary education has a direct impact on a person's success in getting and keeping a good job, and in fulfilling their personal dreams.

We have already made major investments in post-secondary education, and taken steps to make the

system accountable for results. Part of our funding for universities and colleges is tied to their performance and we require them to publish job placement statistics. That way, parents and students can judge for themselves which institutions produce graduates most likely to succeed.

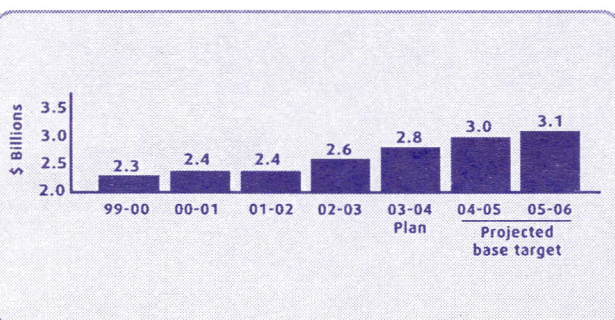
While there are some who want to reverse these reforms, we believe that the only way to move is forward.

Advancing Education

With more funding, more innovative ideas and our new focus on achieving real, measurable results, we are proud of our achievements in post-secondary education:

- The creation of the first new medical school in Ontario in 30 years, and the first new university in 40 years
- Record numbers of people enrolled in post-secondary institutions, including medical/nursing degree courses
- Cooperation between colleges and universities to offer joint degrees
- More than \$7 BILLION of investments with the federal government into research and development at Ontario universities since 1995
- Increased funding to the Ontario College of Teachers to help improve and share teaching practices
- The historic Learning Opportunities Task Force that helped open the door to accommodating the learning disabled in all post-secondary institutions

OPERATING GRANTS TO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES MULTI-YEAR BASE FUNDING PROFILE



Our plan to improve our post-secondary education system by making it accountable for excellence includes the following commitments:

- ***We guarantee a place in a college or university program for every willing and qualified student in Ontario.***

- Ensuring availability with more than **\$2.6 BILLION** in funding for the biggest capital investment in post-secondary in nearly half a century.

- New investments of up to \$300 million a year in the **QUALITY** of education in colleges and universities. That's in addition to the nearly \$450 million in funding increases we have already given them to support advanced education for Ontario students.

- Doubling the size of our student assistance program with another \$400 million in funding.

- Allowing internationally based schools to offer university programs and grant degrees in Ontario, as long as they meet our strict standards.

- Increasing the number of skilled tradespersons with actions including tax incentives, combination college/apprenticeship programs and online training.

- Creating high school co-op programs and investing \$90 million in high school equipment and teachers to teach skilled trades.

A Place for Every Student

We **guarantee** that each qualified and motivated student will find a place in a college or university program in Ontario. We are investing more than \$2.6 billion to create spaces for 135,000 new students. That's the largest capital investment in post-secondary education in Ontario since the baby boom generation hit university age in the 1960's. It is the equivalent of building nine new McMaster Universities or 11 new Sheridan Colleges!

In short, we are ready for increased enrolment, and our guarantee to students is firm.

"The Ontario government is delivering the resources. Ontario's universities can now deliver the places," said Dr. Mordechai Rozanski, Chair of the Council of Ontario Universities and President of the University of Guelph. "Ontario's universities will be able to continue the tradition, established over three decades, of providing a place for all qualified applicants."

Not only will students in the so-called 'double cohort' find the space they need, they will also receive the quality of education they deserve. We are creating two Quality Assurance Funds – up to \$200 million a year for universities and \$100 million a year for colleges. We will invest this money in new learning resources, upgraded equipment and student services as well as expanding the number of faculty and graduate teaching assistants.

An Accountable System

It costs taxpayers billions of dollars a year to underwrite the REAL costs of post-secondary education. The educational institutions and the students who attend them benefit from that taxpayer support, and must be accountable for their parts of the system on The Road Ahead –

- We will invest even more money each year in universities and colleges, but we will demand even greater accountability for results. We will tie a greater share of funding for colleges and universities to how well their students fare after graduation, and other key performance indicators. We will require institutions to report in greater detail about how they use their funding, and extend their reporting of how graduates succeed in the workforce.
- At the same time, we are doubling the funding of our generous student assistance program and limiting how much debt an individual can accumulate. We are committing another \$400 million to the Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund, which will enable an estimated 400,000 students to attend college or university over the next decade.

Our careful balance between student assistance and student contribution has been a fair and reasonable compromise, and more students than ever before are benefiting from higher education. In fact, university enrolment is at an all-time high— proof that the system is accessible to those who want to take part.

More Choice and Opportunity

We have made great strides in expanding post-secondary education options. For example, Ontario's first new university in 40 years, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology in Durham, will open in the fall of 2003. Humber, Conestoga and Sheridan Colleges will increase the number of applied degree programs they offer. Meanwhile, Georgian College will expand degree-level learning to the Barrie region.

To continue expanding the choices offered to our students on The Road Ahead, we will –

- Allow internationally based schools to offer university programs and to grant degrees here, as long as they meet strict Ontario standards. We will encourage these new facilities to locate in areas of our province where post-secondary education is not easily available right now.
- Continue working with colleges and universities to create more spaces in high-demand courses such as engineering and computer science.

Real Support for Apprenticeship

The strength of our economy depends on a highly-trained work force. A shortage of skilled labour affects all of us—from the couple facing delays in building their new home, to the small business owner whose production cannot keep up with sales orders.

We will act decisively to increase the number of skilled tradespersons on The Road Ahead –

- We will create a new refundable Apprenticeship Tax Credit for employers to create jobs and increase the supply of skilled-trades workers in Ontario.
- We will add flexibility for young people who might choose trades training by developing a new model combining a college diploma and apprenticeship.
- We will train workers using the latest technology, through a Lifelong Learning Challenge Fund that supports interactive, online training projects that meet workplace needs.
- We will offer special programs to help women who face labour market barriers obtain apprenticeships in the skilled trades, and skills and jobs in the information technology sector.

We must start early to ensure that young people have a genuine opportunity to choose the skilled trades:

- We will create high school co-op programs that give real-world, job-site access to students seriously interested in the skilled trades. Young people should have a direct opportunity to speak to skilled tradespeople, to see the exciting and rewarding opportunities available to them, and to find out how they can get started on a trades career path.
- We will invest \$90 million in our high schools over the next four years to renew technological equipment, to train teachers and to develop partnerships with employers and colleges.
- We will raise the status and profile of the skilled trades by exposing high school students to these careers just as we do with others, helping them to understand that these are valuable, fulfilling and rewarding choices, NOT just alternatives or second options.
- We will work with unions and employers to write materials that will help students make informed choices about a future in the skilled trades.



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

SAFE COMMUNITIES IN A SECURE ONTARIO

*Protecting Our Children
New Rights for Victims
More Police on Our Streets
Tough Action on Crime
Securing Our Border
Consumer Protection*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



Community Safety and Justice

Ontarians need and deserve a strong justice system – one that keeps all our communities safe, with special protection for our children and other vulnerable citizens. It is particularly important for the most vulnerable people in our society to know that criminals are being kept off the streets, and that our society will not tolerate people being victimized.

Our justice system must make it clear that crime does not pay in Ontario, with strong penalties to punish and discourage criminals.

Finally, the people of Ontario must be confident that our justice system has victims' rights, and the rights of all Ontarians to be free from the threat of criminal elements, as its top priorities.

The safety of our communities, and the ability of people to feel safe and secure, is an important measure of the quality of our lives and a key component of Ontario's prosperity.

We will put the rights of victims and the safety of society first, to deter crime with strict and clear consequences, and to make the justice system more accountable to the people it serves and protects. We will do so despite the fact that the federal Liberals continue to refuse to toughen sentencing, bail and parole for serious criminal offences (see "Message to Ottawa" on page 8).

Our plan to provide Ontarians with the safe communities they deserve for themselves and their families includes the following commitments:

- Protecting our children against child pornography, sexual exploitation and youth violence
- Making victims' rights the LAW in Ontario
- Opening parole hearings to the public and giving victims the right to speak at them
- Hiring at least another 1,000 front-line police officers and at least another 100 parole officers across Ontario
- Tough action against gun-related crime, drunk driving and illegal racing
- Help keep Ontario secure against terrorism and organized crime
- More accountability for parole board members and parole officers
- Protecting consumers with a telemarketing registry, a crackdown on fraud and a 'lemon law' for cars and other consumer goods

Protecting Our Children and Other Vulnerable People

If our justice system fails to protect the most vulnerable people in our society, it has failed all of us. We will continue to focus our community safety efforts on Ontario's most vulnerable citizens on The Road Ahead –

- Children are our most precious resource and deserve special protection. That's why we have a comprehensive plan to provide them with better protection under the justice system, as spelled out in our policy paper on 'Helping Families and Children'. Some of the highlights include:
 - Doubling the frontline resources to fight child pornography
 - More special courts and facilities for child victims
 - A crackdown on the sexual exploitation of minors
 - Expanding the 'Amber Alert' system to help stop child abductions in progress
 - Effective anti-bullying strategies at every Ontario school
- We will expand our Elder Abuse Strategy to ensure there are specialized victim services available for seniors, and that they are linked to community victim services throughout Ontario (see our policy paper on 'Supporting Ontario's Seniors').
- We will create a 'High Risk Offender' strategy for use by the Crown and police to ensure all appropriate remedies are used to protect the victims of domestic violence. This will include:
 - Creating a prevention program that uses Criminal Code peace bonds, Domestic Violence Prevention orders and even electronic monitoring of offenders.
 - Legislating that women and their children fleeing domestic violence have priority in receiving subsidized housing.
 - Require that photographs or video be used to record the scenes of domestic violence for use in trials, and bail and parole hearings. This is currently being done by some police forces, but should be a standard procedure across the province.

Youth Crime

The good news is that the federal Liberals have finally replaced the weak and ineffective *Young Offenders Act*. The bad news is that the new law (the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*) is even worse.

The new act is costly, complex (3 times as long as the YOA) and full of awkward rules and requirements. More importantly, it will hold young people LESS accountable for their offences, as well as increasing costs for our justice system.

We proposed 100 amendments to improve the legislation, including tougher sentences for serious crimes, increasing maximum youth sentences, stricter conditions after release from custody, and adult time for adult crime. Not one of these important ideas was accepted by Ottawa.

Supporting Victims Of Crime

- We are ***strengthening the voice of victims*** of crime by providing them an absolute right to speak at parole hearings. Parole Boards should not just hear from the criminal before making a decision. Whether or not the criminal consents, we will also allow the public and the media to attend parole hearings as observers.

We will also give victims the right to be told of any plea bargaining involving their case BEFORE deals are made. The Crown will have to take any Victim Impact Statements into account during the plea bargaining process.

The federal government must follow our lead and expand the right of victims to be heard during trials. Ottawa should give victims of crime an absolute right to speak before sentencing, even in cases involving plea bargains.

- In order to make sure that crime doesn't pay, but criminals DO, we will launch a ***'Crime Won't Pay'*** program to focus on collecting the outstanding restitution orders that criminals have failed to pay to their victims. Anyone coming up for parole will not be allowed to apply if he or she has failed to pay the victim any outstanding restitution.

- To protect victims from being harassed by the criminals, we will give them ***the right to block calls*** placed to their number from any jail in the province. To prevent offenders from running criminal operations out of their jail cells, we give jail officials the power to monitor their phone calls.

- We will further strengthen the *Victims' Bill of Rights* that we created by adding a world-leading Victim Services Standard. The Standard will put the force of law behind the Bill of Rights, making it a legal requirement that all parts of the justice system honour the rights of victims, including:

- information about the progress of the investigation
- information about legal proceedings involving the criminals who harmed them, including court dates and locations
- notice when the criminal has applied for early release (even temporary release), been granted release or escaped
- in cases of sexual assault, the right (upon request) to deal with law enforcement officials of the same gender
- prompt return of their property when the justice system no longer needs it

- We will overhaul the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board to eliminate bureaucratic red tape and dramatically speed up the payment of compensation to victims. We will require the Board to hold hearings sooner, and to issue a decision within 30 days of the hearing.

While we are making these improvements, we will continue to demand that the federal Liberals come forward with real, effective measures to support victims of crime (see box on page 8). Finally, to better reflect its purpose, we will change the name of the Board to the ***Crime Victims Compensation Board***.

- We will instruct prosecutors to seek tough sentences for all hate crimes and will support police efforts to increase security at places of worship.

Supporting the Front Lines in The Fight Against Crime

We have always been proud to support the women and men who face potential danger each day in order to keep our communities safe. Our support for the front lines of our justice system will become even stronger on The Road Ahead –

- We have already funded the hiring of 1,000 more police officers for communities across Ontario since 1998. Now, we will provide the funding for at least **ANOTHER 1,000 front-line officers** over 5 years to help keep our communities safe.
- We have already hired 165 new provincial probation and parole officers across Ontario. Now, we will hire at least ANOTHER 100 to help keep track of criminals out on probation and parole.
- We will **increase the penalties for illegal racing and drunk driving**, the two most dangerous forms of abuse of driving privileges. Just as we should never allow someone who shoots at other people to own a gun, we must not let those who have threatened the lives of innocent people by repeatedly driving drunk, road racing or drag racing ever get behind the wheel again.

A second conviction for drunk driving or illegal racing will mean automatic loss of the driver's licence for LIFE, and seizure and sale of the driver's vehicle. (To keep people from selling their cars before they are convicted, the vehicle would be impounded as soon as the charge is laid.)

- While we understand that defence lawyers are hired to protect their clients, they should NOT be allowed to obtain and suppress evidence. Right now, suppressing evidence is illegal only if it amounts to obstruction of justice. (In one recent high-profile case, the accused was acquitted because the judge ruled his conduct did not amount to "obstruction.") We will make it a provincial offence for a lawyer to obtain and suppress evidence, period. The penalty will include automatic disbarment.

- When defence lawyers receive advance disclosure of the Crown's evidence, they are supposed to keep the photographs and documents confidential, and not release them to other people. This is especially true when the evidence includes sensitive material related to crime victims.

We will make it an offence for a lawyer to reveal the evidence disclosed by the prosecution prior to a criminal trial, or for anyone to receive that evidence. The penalty will include automatic disbarment.

If the evidence is published for profit, we will seize the proceeds and give them to the victims or their families.

- We will strengthen Ontario's parole practices, making it tougher for violent criminals to obtain parole. We will also pass a law making it possible for a police officer to immediately arrest someone seen breaching the conditions of parole.

When a criminal is let out on bail, probation or parole, the conditions for that release should be strictly enforced. We will crack down on violations of those provisions, sending criminals straight to jail and/or collecting the fines and penalties involved.

- In order to help protect our police, and our entire society, from criminals using firearms, we will introduce a package of reforms designed to effectively fight gun-related crime:
 - We will instruct Crown Attorneys to seek the toughest sentences and the strictest bail conditions for criminals who use a gun (or even have one in their possession) while committing a crime.
 - We will step up our efforts with the federal and U.S. governments to fight the smuggling of guns from the United States, the source of most of the illegal handguns being used by criminals in Ontario.

- We will set up special courts for firearms-related offences to ensure they are treated as extraordinary, more serious crimes.

One thing we will NOT do is waste the time of our police and busy courts with prosecutions under the federal Liberals' over-priced, ineffective gun registry boondoggle. We will instruct our police and Crown Attorneys that gun crimes are a priority and will be vigorously prosecuted. However, federal paperwork and registration rules will NOT be a priority for provincial prosecutors.

- We will help end the danger of major crime cases falling through the cracks because of a lack of cooperation or information sharing among police forces. We will develop standards for a unified, province-wide information sharing system for municipal police forces and the OPP, and require all Ontario police to be using the system within five years.

The Liberal Gun Registry Boondoggle

This out-of-control program is going to cost taxpayers an estimated one billion dollars to implement, and ANOTHER estimated one billion dollars to enforce.

Instead of harassing law-abiding hunters, farmers and sports shooters, Ottawa should spend that money on effective measures such as combating gun smuggling and theft, and keeping gun-using criminals behind bars.

Keeping Ontario Secure

In recent years, we have all seen global terrorism hitting closer to home. Ontarians were among those who lost their lives in the September 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center. The connections to Canada of people who assisted those terrorists make the potential threats to our nation all the more real.

Unfortunately, the threats of organized crime and terrorism to the safety of Ontario's communities cannot be ignored. These dangers may have started outside Ontario, but we are all now more aware of the possible threat to our own families. Strong action is needed if Ontario is to maintain its security and prevent international criminals and terrorists from establishing operations in our province. On The Road Ahead, we will –

- Create a Fugitive Squad to identify, track down and apprehend fugitives within Ontario. This will be based on an expansion of the ROPE (Repeat Offender Parole Enforcement) program used by the Ontario Provincial Police to track down parole violators and repeat offenders.
- Introduce a special program to identify people living in Ontario who are wanted on international arrest warrants, including those who are currently in jail or in prison in our province. We will then direct whatever resources are needed to have those people deported to face justice as quickly as possible.

- Demand that the federal government listen to the experts and bring in a law that makes membership in any identified criminal or terrorist organization a crime with a hefty sentence. That way, our police will be able to immediately arrest anyone they reasonably suspect is a member of an outlaw motorcycle gang, organized crime group or terrorist organization. Prosecutors would not have to prove the individual committed a crime, only that they belong to the outlawed organization.

This new law should also include the power to seize the assets of these organizations, hitting them directly in the pocket book. Experience in the United States and elsewhere shows that this kind of a law would be a powerful weapon against organizations dedicated to crime or terrorism.

- Negotiate a **'made for Ontario' immigration agreement** with the federal government that gives our province control over immigration policies. We know that we can do a much better job than the federal Liberals have in keeping our border secure, attracting the skilled immigrants we need, and keeping criminals and terrorists out of Ontario. (You'll find details of our proposal in The Road Ahead policy paper on 'A Passport to Ontario'.)

Earlier this year, the federal Auditor General reported that there are as many as 36,000 deportees loose in the country. These are people who were ordered deported then lost track of by Ottawa.

These deportees are in addition to some 500 fugitives from federal bail, parole and custody (prison escapees, etc.) on the loose in Ontario on any given day.

Making Justice Accountable

Just like any other government service, our justice system must be accountable to the people it serves, and to the taxpayers who fund its activities.

- We will make sure that people who break the law, from speeding drivers to illegal garbage dumpers, pay their fines. We will collect more of that money from offenders and use every penny to fund law enforcement and victims' compensation. Our crack-down will include refusing to issue any government licence or permit to offenders who refuse to pay their fines. In addition, delinquent corporate offenders would be ineligible for any government loan or assistance.
- All too often, Ontario taxpayers get stuck with the legal costs of people fighting to remain in Canada. We will stop providing provincial legal aid for immigration and refugee matters. We will also stop providing legal aid to illegal immigrants and refugee claimants when they are charged with criminal offences. The federal Liberals let these individuals into the country in the first place; they are free to create a federal legal aid program if they wish.
- When a criminal is released from custody, those responsible for that decision should be able to justify their actions. In cases where a released criminal kills someone, we will allow the parole officer or Parole Board member involved in their release to be compelled to testify at the resulting inquest. By the same token, Parole Board members should be judged in large part by how often the criminals they release go on to commit more crimes. The rate of repeat offences will be a key factor in evaluating the performance of Parole Board members, and deciding whether to fire or promote them.

Protecting Consumers

Hard-working Ontarians deserve protection from faulty consumer goods, fraud and unfair business practices. The rights of consumers must be both protected and respected.

Our plan to improve consumer protection on The Road Ahead includes –

- Giving people the power to put their phone numbers in a non-telemarketing registry, and prohibit telemarketing companies from calling anyone on that list. The telemarketing industry will have to develop the comprehensive registry and keep it complete and up to date.

We will also ***crack down on telemarketing fraud*** with aggressive investigation and prosecution. Those convicted will have the proceeds of their crimes seized to help compensate their victims.

- Passing a '***Lemon Law***' to protect Ontarians against faulty consumer goods. If your new car or other consumer product requires major repairs for defects three times within the first twelve months, the dealer must offer you a brand new replacement at no charge.
- Raise the limit for claims in Small Claims Court from \$10,000 to \$20,000 to allow easier access to quick, simple and inexpensive justice for everyday disputes. You don't even need a lawyer to go to Small Claims Court.

Message to Ottawa: Action Required!

Unfortunately, some reforms of the justice system can only be made by the federal government.

The federal Liberals have long been out of touch with the needs and concerns of Canadians regarding justice and community safety. From the *Young Offenders Act* to quotas for releasing criminals from prison, the federal government has proven time and again that it just does not 'get it'.

The vast majority of people want to feel secure, see criminals brought to justice and have the guilty firmly punished as a deterrent to crime. In order to help accomplish those simple, but vital, goals, Ottawa must do the following:

- Create a national sex offender registry
- Stop granting pardons to child molesters and other convicted sex offenders
- Bring in real, effective legislation on young offenders (see box on page 2)
- Outlaw the production, distribution and possession of child pornography
- Raise the age of consent from 14 to 16
- Abandon plans to decriminalize or even legalize marijuana and other drugs
- Prohibit conditional sentences for sex offenders
- Increase the penalties for people who grow or possess marijuana for distribution
- Create specific offences of breaching parole or conditional release orders
- Create a national DNA registry for everyone convicted of crimes against the person

- Forbid the double, triple and even quadruple 'credit' given by sentencing judges for time criminals spent in jail before trial
- Make domestic assault a specific offence
- Make it harder for repeat domestic violence offenders to get bail
- Allow domestic violence offenders to be ordered to take part in provincial violence prevention programs as a condition of their release
- Require a mandatory minimum 90-day custody for conviction on stalking, assault or making threats while bound by a restraining order
- Enhance the national police computer system to show offences committed while on bail, probation or conditional release
- Eliminate the need for police to process every child pornography image seized (often in the tens of thousands) for disclosure to the offender's lawyer
- Require consecutive sentences for sex crimes when they are committed by a repeat offender or someone on parole for similar crimes
- Create the crime of using a gun in the commission of another crime, and impose a mandatory 10-year consecutive sentence (on top of any other sentence)
- Seize the proceeds of crime from convicted telemarketing fraud artists and use the proceeds to compensate victims

We will continue to press the federal Liberals to take these, and all other possible actions, to better protect Ontarians and all Canadians.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

SAFEGUARDING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

*Clean Water
Clean Air
Ontario's Living Legacy*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



Safeguarding the Natural Environment

A healthy environment is one of the greatest legacies we can leave to future generations of Ontarians. But investments in preserving our natural environment are not only for the future, they are part of the quality of life for Ontarians today. All of us need and deserve to have confidence in the safety of our water and air, and to know that the natural wonders of Ontario are being preserved.

Our commitments to safeguarding Ontario's natural environment include:

- Ontario will have and enforce the toughest clean water standards in the world.
- We are introducing stringent emissions limits for fossil fuel burning power plants, and closing all coal-burning plants in Ontario.
- We will meet all of Ontario's obligations under the Kyoto Protocol for limiting greenhouse gas emissions.
- We will build and improve on Ontario's Living Legacy, the largest expansion of protected lands in Canadian history.

Clean Water

We're dedicated to giving Ontarians the confidence they need that Ontario has a safe water supply. That's why we are making a commitment to give Ontario ***the toughest clean water standards in the world***, and to enforce those standards with comprehensive legislation.

During the past year, the government worked to put in place the toughest policies in the world for safe, clean drinking water. Today, I am announcing the expansion of our commitment to invest in safe drinking water to \$750 million over three years.

- Finance Minister Janet Ecker, 2003 Ontario Budget Speech, March 27, 2003

Our commitment to protecting Ontario's water will continue on The Road Ahead –

- We will introduce legislation to protect the sources of our water supplies – the last piece of our package of clean water laws. We've already introduced laws to cover safe drinking water, sustainable water and sewage systems, and proper management of nutrient waste.

To help prepare for this legislation, we created a "Source Protection Advisory Panel" of key stakeholders from municipalities, conservation authorities, agriculture and environmental sectors to make recommendations on the development of source protection and watershed planning.

We also invested \$10 million into 31 groundwater studies across Ontario in 2002 to identify sensitive groundwater areas and potential sources of contamination. That was the first time a study of this magnitude was ever undertaken in Ontario.

In the meantime, we are committing the funding needed to implement our new clean water rules to date:

- \$200M to help municipalities meet tough new drinking water standards
- \$31M for provincial park compliance
- \$41M to support the implementation and compliance of the *Safe Drinking Water Act*
- \$245M to help municipalities upgrade water systems
- \$50M to create a Clean Water Legacy Trust and centre of excellence

- We will implement all 121 recommendations from Justice O'Connor's two Walkerton Reports, including the recruitment of more than 50 permanent drinking water inspectors and 10 drinking water supervisors, as well as more than doubling the number of municipal water systems inspectors.

- We will implement the \$6 million Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network with municipalities and conservation authorities to provide early warning systems for changes in water levels.

- We are also meeting our commitment to safe drinking water by implementing key regulations under the *Nutrient Management Act*. Steps will be

taken to ensure compliance by new and large farms. No action will be required of existing small farms until consultations on a manageable and affordable implementation of the Act are completed and funding programs are in place.

Clean Air

Thanks to our actions against smog and other forms of air pollution, Ontario is rapidly becoming a North American leader in preserving clean air (see box below).

Breathing Easier: Action on Clean Air

We have taken effective, innovative action to clean up Ontario's air and reduce the impact of our biggest sources of emissions:

- We added measurements of "fine particulate matter" to Ontario's Air Quality Index, the first province in Canada to do so.
- We created Ontario's first ever "Drive Clean" program, cutting smog-causing emissions from vehicles in the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton by 15%.
- Our "Smog Patrol Program" has conducted over 13,000 vehicle inspections and issued more than 2,200 tickets to polluters since 1998.
- We exempted bio-diesel fuels from the provincial fuel tax, to encourage consumers to buy products that use this renewable fuel.
- We extended our sales tax rebate for hybrid-electric automobiles to cover sport utility vehicles and light duty trucks.
- We created Ontario's "Environmental SWAT Team", a mobile unit dedicated to enforcing Ontario's tough environmental laws.
- We created "OnAIR", an on-line emissions reporting registry to give the public broad access to information on air pollution and reporting on emissions of 358 air contaminants.

While we are proud of our efforts to improve air quality in Ontario, our success is limited by a simple truth – fully half of our air pollution comes from sources in the United States. Until the federal Liberals get serious about negotiating effective air quality agreements with our American neighbours, Ontario will always have an air pollution challenge.

While we continue to push Ottawa to take action, we will also press on with our plan for The Road Ahead: to reduce emissions of pollutants, and to cut greenhouse gases to meet Ontario's obligations under the Kyoto Protocol –

- The Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement on reducing the emissions that many scientists blame for global warming, demands that Canada dramatically reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases to 6% below 1990 levels by 2012. This would require an enormous reduction of 240 million tonnes in emissions from the projected level in 2010. We agree with the need to act on climate change, but Canada needs to set realistic goals and have a practical plan to meet them, instead of being driven by artificial targets.

Ontario is already doing its part. We have made our province the first jurisdiction in the WORLD to require monitoring and reporting of a full suite of key greenhouse gases. Thanks to the actions we've already taken on reducing pollutants, Ontario will also meet its obligations for the Kyoto Protocol. Our Drive Clean program alone is expected to reduce 186,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually—the equivalent of taking more than half a million vehicles off the road permanently.

- We are starting now to close all of Ontario's coal-burning power plants by 2015, a realistic deadline (recommended by the all-party Select Committee on Alternative Fuel Sources in 2002) that ensures Ontario will not face a power shortage while reducing pollution.

In the meantime, we are implementing stringent emissions caps for power stations burning fossil fuel. By 2010, the caps will reduce limits on smog and acid rain-causing emissions by 45%.

- Our plans for Ontario's future energy needs are based on clean energy sources, and we have a comprehensive blueprint for encouraging the use of renewable and alternative energy as well as conservation. The details are spelled out in our policy paper on 'Reliable, Affordable, Sustainable Energy'.

Ontario's Living Legacy

We launched the largest campaign in Canadian history to create provincial parks and protected areas – Ontario's Living Legacy. Through an unprecedented effort that won the support of environmentalists, resource industries and local residents, we have set aside a significant portion of Ontario to be enjoyed for its natural environment, and to be preserved for future generations.

Ontario's Living Legacy has created 378 new provincial parks and protected areas – more than all previous Ontario governments put together! This is a total of 9.5 million hectares of land across the province, the equivalent of all of Ontario south of Algonquin Park.

Protection and Preservation

When it comes to protecting Ontario's natural environment, we have done more than all previous Ontario governments combined (see box above on 'Ontario's Living Legacy').

We have tackled the tough issue of combining the concerns of local residents, business and industry, and environmental groups in finding realistic solutions that protect our natural environment without killing jobs. A perfect example is the Oak Ridges Moraine, the environmentally sensitive band of land north of Toronto, which will have its unique character and eco-system preserved with a continuous area of green space, while limited development is allowed nearby.

We will build on our successes, and preserve and protect our natural environment, on The Road Ahead –

- We will create an important new tourism destination by combining protected coastal areas from Northwestern to Central Ontario as the Great Lakes Heritage Coast. This new protected area under Ontario's Living Legacy will provide a unique

experience to visitors from around the world and help bring tourism dollars into a large number of communities.

- We will simplify Ontario's system for environmental assessments to make sure that projects with serious implications, such as hazardous waste facilities, chemical plants and oil refineries, are ALWAYS subject to full review. Projects with known impacts, such as a dry cleaning shop or a highway widening, would only require detailed notice to the Environment Ministry.

As part of this reform, we will open up the process to more public input. When the Ministry issues a report on a project, anyone directly affected will be able to make a written submission that the Ministry MUST take into account in its final decision.

Finally, we will help speed up the environmental assessment process without compromising quality by simply holding federal and Ontario assessments at the same time wherever possible. It's a practical step to replace red tape with 'green tape' in Ontario.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

HELPING FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

*A Minister for Human Development
Helping Children with Special Needs
Early Childhood Development
More Resources for Children's Health Care
Protecting Ontario's Children*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



Helping Families and Children

Like people around the world, Ontarians feel the most important measure of the quality of their lives is their ability to protect and provide for their families and children. The next generation of Ontarians embodies our future, with all of our hopes and dreams in their hands.

That's why we have nearly doubled our investments in children's social services since 1995 to more than \$2.2 billion a year (see box below).

Investing In Children's Health And Development

- Created the Ontario Child Care Supplement for Working Families to help low- and moderate-income families participate in the labour force
- Made far-reaching changes to the *Child and Family Services Act* and substantially increased resources to Children's Aid Societies
- Built a network of Early Years Centres across the province to support parents and children and connect them with important services
- Introduced the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program
- Expanded speech and language services for preschool children
- Introduced immunization of school-aged children against measles and Hepatitis B.
- Implemented an infant hearing screening program
- \$7 million for initiatives to stem the growing problem of eating disorders
- \$11 million contribution to establish and expand the Electronic Child Health Network
- Increased funding to Children's Treatment Centres by \$20 million annually

Many aspects of our plan for The Road Ahead will help benefit and protect Ontario's children, from quality reforms for education to preserving our natural environment. (We invite you to request your free copies of our Policy Papers on these and other important issue areas. You'll find a complete listing on the last page of this Paper.)

In addition to those positive steps for the future lives and careers of today's youth, our commitments to Ontario's families and children include:

- Creating a new **Minister for Human Development** to direct our efforts to help the next generation of Ontarians reach their full potential

- Replacing welfare for children with a new **Ontario Child Benefit** that provides more money for the needs of children on social assistance
- Providing direct support to families with special needs children
- A 'Kinship Care' program to help relatives care for children at risk
- Expanding our support of early childhood development
- Dedicating more resources to the special health care needs of children, including children's mental health
- Protecting our children against child pornography, sexual exploitation and youth violence

A Minister for Human Development

We're proud of our record of investing in Ontario's present and future through our children. However, experts tell us that our programs for human development (now split between Ministries) would be more effective if they were part of a coordinated effort to help every child reach his or her potential on The Road Ahead -

- We will create a new Cabinet post of ***Minister for Human Development***. The new Minister will be responsible for all human development programs now in place at the ministries of Health and of Community, Family and Children's Services, including the Early Years program and Healthy Babies, Healthy Children.

The Minister will also have a broad and powerful mandate to review ALL proposed government policy (including education and health policies) from the human development perspective, helping us make sure that all services and programs work together for the benefit of the next generation of Ontarians, and better meet their needs in the future.

From infancy to school age and beyond, Ontario's children will be supported in reaching their full potential.

The Ontario Child Benefit

Unlike adults, children on social assistance cannot provide for themselves by getting a job. They should not be subject to the stigma of being 'on

welfare'. We have already taken disabled people out of the welfare system and given them a special benefit program designed to meet their needs. Now, we will do the same for Ontario children on social assistance.

- We will increase social assistance support for children with a new ***Ontario Child Benefit***, effectively taking Ontario children off welfare and giving them a higher benefit designed to meet their needs.

Under the Ontario Child Benefit, a family on social assistance with one child would receive nearly \$1,500 more per year. A second child in the family would increase their annual benefits by almost \$1,300, and each additional child would mean about \$1,200 more per year. This is money that parents or guardians can use to better provide for children on social assistance.

Helping Families of Vulnerable Children

Families dealing with the challenges of special needs children, and family members who want to help children at risk, often need extra support to cope with their heavier burdens. We will provide that extra support on The Road Ahead -

- Parents of children with special needs deserve more control over the care their loved ones receive. We will provide provincial support directly to them, rather than to agencies. That way, parents can choose the care that best suits their children. At the same time, we will ensure that services continue to be available in all parts of Ontario.

- We know the sacrifices made by those who care inside their homes for disabled children. Those who make the difficult choice to care for their loved ones at home rather than placing them in institutions deserve our support and encouragement. We will introduce the **Family Caregiver Tax Credit** for those caring for disabled children at home (or for any aged, infirm or disabled dependent relatives inside their own homes).

The value of Ontario tax credits for caregivers will be increased and extended to recognize family members who care for dependent relatives living in their own homes. This increased tax support will provide some 165,000 family caregivers with average annual savings of about \$300 each.

Helping Families Cope

We've made significant investments in helping families with children cope with many different challenges:

For Special Needs

- \$39 million annually for an intensive early intervention program for children with autism aged two to five (see page 5)
- \$27 million annually for specialized programs and services that help children whose complex special needs are not being fully met within their communities

For Modest Incomes

- Over \$200 million in benefits annually to help low- to moderate-income working families with children under age seven
- Annual supplement of \$210 per child under age seven provided to low- and moderate-income working single parents

For Community Support

- Our Ontario's Promise program has mobilized communities and organizations in support of children and youth. To date, partners have committed over \$46 million

- It is always sad when a children's aid society is forced to remove a child from its natural parents. This is an unfortunate step, but sometimes absolutely necessary to protect the child.

Compounding the tragedy is that sometimes the child loses contact with other loving, responsible family members. These relatives often face complex bureaucracy and must hire lawyers if they want to care for the child themselves.

We will implement a **Kinship Care** program that makes it easier for grandparents and other loving family members to care for a child taken from its parents – provided that these family members are responsible, competent and pass rigorous background checks.

Supporting Early Childhood Development

The landmark Early Years Study that we commissioned confirmed the evidence that early childhood development is one of the most important investments you can make in the future. Children given these opportunities achieve more of their goals and reach more of their potential.

That's why we have launched 103 Early Years Centres across Ontario that offer core universal programs such as parenting classes, early literacy programs and workshops on child development. They also offer tailored programs that are community driven such as child care, special programs for dads, and child care registries.

Early years expert Dr. Fraser Mustard suggests the next step is to better integrate our Early Years programs with the education system, and to start transforming the Early Years Centres into early child development and parenting centres.

We agree, and we'll strengthen our support for early childhood development on The Road Ahead by –

- Increasing funding for the Early Years program for 2003 to \$192 million
- Creating strong linkages between our successful Early Years Centres and the education system
- Requiring that all Early Years Centres be run by a team of professionals in early child development, including at least one manager with a university degree in Early Childhood Education.
- Integrating all of our early learning and human development programs under the new Minister for Human Development, and linking them with other programs across government.

Investing in Children's Health

Once again this year, we will be investing a record amount of money in Ontario's health care system – some \$28 billion. While there are many challenges in meeting the needs of our growing and aging population and the demands for new medical technologies and medicines, we have identified Ontario's shortage of family physicians as a top priority.

You'll find our detailed plans for recruiting, training, retaining and supporting family physicians in Ontario, and for expanding the availability of Family Health Networks and nurse practitioners, in our policy paper on 'Better Health Care for You and Your Family'.

Three of our specific commitments to improving health care for children on The Road Ahead are –

- Creating a Children's Health Network, linking all of the children's hospitals across Ontario to share resources, knowledge and capabilities to provide the best possible health care for our children. To support the health care needs of children in the north, we will invest nearly \$6.5 million to support the Electronic Child Health Network North, providing an electronic link between health care professionals and families in the north, and hundreds of pediatricians and health care professionals in southern Ontario.
- Vastly increasing our annual investment in our groundbreaking early intervention program for children with autism from \$39 million to nearly \$95 million by 2006 (see box on next page).

More Support For Children With Autism

In 1999, we became the first Ontario government to fund Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) for children with autism aged two to five.

Now, we will vastly increase the annual budget for this program. It will nearly double to \$72 million this year, and grow to almost \$95 million by 2006. The extra

funding will be used to expand supports and introduce new programs for all children with autism and their families.

In addition, we are providing \$3 million to colleges and universities over two years to provide new training programs for professionals who provide care and treatment for children with autism.

- Increasing our support of children's mental health services. Studies have shown that treatment at an early age can reduce future mental health problems by up to 75%.

To help support this important work, we are creating a centre of excellence for Children's Mental Health at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

In order to revitalize children's mental health services across Ontario, we will provide \$50M in funding over the next three years to ensure that we can

attract, recruit and retain the best possible mental health workers for these vulnerable children.

Protecting Ontario's Children

As the most vulnerable members of our society, children need and deserve a special level of protection. Ontarians, particularly parents, want to see the increasing level of threats posed to children met by strong action – to toughen the penalties for victimizing children and to protect our children from predators and other criminals. That is precisely what we will do on The Road Ahead –

Protecting Our Children

We have taken strong action to protect Ontario's children from crime, including sexual exploitation and domestic violence:

- \$164 million in increased funding this year to enable Children's Aid Societies to protect children at risk of abuse or neglect. This brings our commitment to the protection of children to over \$1 billion in 2003-04.
- \$26 million over four years to improve the safety and security of abused women and their children by adding 300 shelter beds; \$9 million annually for counselling,

telephone crisis services, and other supports.

- \$10 million annually for programs to help women and children recover from the effects of domestic violence.
- \$2 million over three years to the Toronto Police Service to crack down on child pornography.
- Enacted the *Rescuing Children from Sexual Exploitation Act*.
- Proclaimed *Christopher's Law* and provided \$6 million annually to create and maintain the first registry of sex offenders in Canada.

- We will more than double the frontline resources for fighting child pornography. The specialized Child Pornography Investigations Unit we created with the OPP will also help local police forces learn how to better find and catch those who victimize our children in this way.

- We will expand the **Ontario Amber Alert program** to help find abducted children faster. This system, adopted from the United States and named after an abducted child, uses electronic highway signs and a network of radio and television stations to alert the public when a child is abducted and provide details of the victim and suspect. We will expand the system to include more media outlets and to liaise with volunteer groups dedicated to helping children at risk.

- All too often, child victims are at risk of being re-victimized by a justice system that does not have the skills or facilities to deal with their special needs. We will create special courts for child exploitation cases, and expand our system of child friendly court facilities across Ontario.

As well, we will give Crown Attorneys more training to deal exclusively with child exploitation. In order to avoid the additional trauma cause to child victims by delays in their cases, we will target Crown resources to cases involving sex crimes against children in order to help get them to trial faster.

- We will press Ottawa to amend the *Criminal Code* to require that the sentence for any crime involving children include a mandatory order that the convicted criminal not have any further contact with the child.

- The sex trade poses an increasing threat to children and minors in our society. We will vigorously prosecute employers who hire persons under 18 in the adult entertainment and sex trades.

We will create safe houses for children whom we rescue from the sex trade, where they can stay while receiving medical treatment, counselling and, hopefully, reunification with their families. We will help fund those safe houses by seizing the proceeds of crime involving the sexual exploitation of minors.

Once someone has been convicted of ANY crime involving the sexual exploitation of minors, we will insist that he or she serve the entire sentence without any chance of early release.

These changes will help to strengthen the *Rescuing Children from Sexual Exploitation Act*, a new law we brought last year to forcefully punish people and companies involved in the child sex trade.

- Assault, extortion, intimidation and threats of violence are not a 'natural part of childhood', but that is how some people describe the problem of bullying. The more we study bullying among children and youth, the more evidence there is of increasing violence and of long-term, serious damage to victims. We have young people who drop out of school, become alcohol or drug addicts, or even commit suicide because of bullying.

We will work to stop the nightmare for victims and their families. Our young people should not be afraid to go to school, and bullies should not be learning that violence and threats can be used without consequences. All Ontario schools will be required to have effective anti-bullying strategies, and repeat bullies will be required to complete so-called '**scared straight**' programs that use prison tours and meetings with hardened criminals as well as victims and their families to show the consequences of violent, abusive behaviour.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

SUPPORTING ONTARIO'S SENIORS

*A Break on Property Taxes
Investments in Health Care
Support for Caregivers
Support for Working Seniors*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



Supporting Ontario's Seniors

More than 1.5 million of Ontario's 12 million residents are aged 65 or older, and that number is growing all the time. With longer life spans and more active lifestyles, the role of seniors in Ontario society has changed dramatically in this generation.

Today, many more people are able and willing to continue contributing to society as working people, mentors and volunteers past age 65. After their working careers, Ontario seniors need more years of support, care and protection to match their longer life expectancies. Much of that support and care often comes from their own family members, who take on the extra responsibility for aging relatives and could use added support.

Our plan to meet these changing needs of Ontario seniors and their families includes the following commitments:

- Cutting property taxes for Ontario seniors by an average of \$475 a year per household
- Eliminating mandatory retirement for seniors who want to keep working past age 65
- Establishing a TELE-SENIOR phone service to give seniors 'one stop shopping' for all provincial government services
- New measures to protect seniors from telemarketing fraud and elder abuse
- Introducing a Family Caregiver Tax Credit for people taking care of aged, infirm or disabled relatives
- Making major new investments in health care services for the elderly, including osteoporosis, cataract surgery and long-term care

Keeping Seniors Financially Secure

As Ontarians live longer, more active lives, many seniors are able and willing to continue contributing to society as working people, mentors and volunteers. All of us stand to benefit from the accumulated wisdom and experience of our seniors.

- After a lifetime of contributing to society, seniors deserve support in being able to stay in their own homes. Our ***Seniors' Property Tax Rebate*** will eliminate the provincial portion of property taxes for seniors (about 25% of the average bill) as of July 1, 2003.

For the average senior household, this will mean ***an annual savings of \$475***. With nearly a million senior households in Ontario, this tax cut will put \$450 million a year back in the hands of Ontario seniors.

We will also exempt life leases sponsored by a registered charity or a non-profit organization from land transfer taxes.

These reductions will NOT affect our commitment to increase education funding by another \$2 billion.

- Those aged 65 plus have much to contribute to Ontario, and it's wrong to prevent those wanting to work. We will eliminate mandatory retirement and employment discrimination for people 65 and older by:
 - Amending the *Human Rights Code* and a host of other laws to prohibit mandatory retirement at any specific age,
 - Helping business sectors where needed to adjust to the new rules,

- Keeping existing collective agreements in place (the new rules will take effect with new contracts), and
- Making exceptions for legitimate occupational requirements and bona fide pension plans.

Of course, anyone who WANTS to retire at 65 will remain free to do so.

It's also important to understand that this change will NOT affect anyone's pension rights. You can always choose to retire at 65 and still receive your full pension.

Protecting Seniors At Risk

Seniors are far more likely than other groups to need help or protection in certain areas. They are more often the victims of fraud and related crimes, and may be vulnerable to abuse or maltreatment. In addition to our measures to increase community safety (see our policy paper on 'Safe Communities in a Secure Ontario'), we will act to protect these seniors at risk on The Road Ahead –

- We will establish TELE-SENIOR, a toll-free line providing one-stop access to all the information seniors require. People often find it frustrating to try and navigate through all of the seniors' services provided by government. Whether it's information about long-term care, access to programs in your community, or filing a complaint about age discrimination, you'll find the help you need at TELE-SENIOR.
- We will step up efforts to combat unsafe medication. Among other things, we will work with pharmacists and drug stores to expand the availability of "**Brown Bag Days**"—when seniors can bring their different medications to pharmacists and get advice about the effects.

- We will target telemarketing fraud through aggressive investigation and prosecution. Those convicted will have their assets seized and sold to help compensate their victims.

In addition, we will require the telemarketing industry to create a registry of people who do NOT want to receive telemarketing calls, to keep the registry up-to-date and complete, and require that all companies in Ontario abide by that list.

The telemarketing registry is just part of our plan to protect consumers from fraud, unfair business practices and faulty consumer goods. You'll find details in our policy paper on 'Safe Communities in a Secure Ontario'.

- We are spending \$4 million to fund our Elder Abuse Strategy that helps ensure seniors are treated with respect and are protected from harm or abuse.

Caring For The Elderly

After a lifetime of contributing to society and supporting their families, seniors deserve to be cared for in turn. Government has the responsibility to reach out to seniors in need, and to support the volunteers and family members who are helping to care for our elderly citizens. Here is how we will help care for the elderly on The Road Ahead –

- We know the sacrifices made by those who care inside their homes for aged, infirm or disabled relatives. Rather than placing loved ones in institutions, many choose to look after them at home. Those who make that difficult choice deserve our support and encouragement. We will introduce the **Family Caregiver Tax Credit** for those caring for aged, infirm or disabled dependent relatives inside their own homes.

The value of Ontario tax credits for caregivers will be increased and extended to include infirm spouses and common-law partners, and to recognize family members who care for dependent relatives living in their own homes. Tax assistance for individuals with disabilities will also be increased to help them afford more dignity and independence.

This increased tax support will provide annual benefits of \$50 million to about 165,000 family caregivers and people with disabilities, providing average savings of about \$300 each.

- Retirement homes become the living spaces for many of our seniors, offering both accommodation and care for the elderly, but they are currently unregulated. We will introduce a system of

province-wide regulation that protects the seniors who live in retirement homes. Seniors, their families, retirement home operators and other stakeholders will all be consulted so that we can all have faith in the new system.

- We will make the treatment of osteoporosis—a condition that affects tens of thousands of seniors—a funding priority. Our Osteoporosis Action Plan includes \$7 million in annual funding to support a comprehensive plan to improve prevention, management and treatment.
- Through an innovative new program, we will expand the number of facilities that offer cataract surgery and provide \$10 million in annual funding to give seniors access to more cataract surgeries. By paying for treatment at state-of-the-art facilities run by the private sector, our government will provide 15,000 additional cataract surgeries every year at convenient locations through the province.
- Our government has already announced locations for 20,000 new beds in nursing homes and homes for the aged – the largest increase in Ontario history. We will build on our record and increase funding by \$400 million to enhance supports for residents in long-term care facilities and continue the expansion of beds. In addition to creating new openings in these facilities, we will renovate another 16,000 beds to bring them up to high provincial standards.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

RELIABLE, AFFORDABLE,
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

*Protecting Consumers
Building the Supply
Using Clean Energy
Promoting Conservation*



Energy for Ontario's Future

All households and businesses in Ontario need to know they can rely on getting the energy they need, today and in the future. Affordable access to clean energy is one of the keys to economic growth, and is tremendously important to the safety and comfort of our lives.

Unfortunately, some of our major power plants developed unexpected problems last year and electricity prices soared when we had to import energy during one of the longest, hottest summers on record.

Last fall, we took action to protect consumers and small businesses by lowering electricity prices and freezing them until at least 2006. Consumers also received rebates for price increases they had already paid.

While protecting consumers, we must continue to build up the supply of clean energy in Ontario. Some of this extra power will come from major new generating projects, and some from small and independent sources. We'll keep on adding to our electricity generating capacity until we are sufficiently above our highest peak demand that we can never be short of power.

By making sure the needed supply is already on line, that consumers have very strong tools to protect their interests, and by promoting energy conservation, we can ensure an open market WILL work in the future.

Our plan to provide reliable and sustainable energy for Ontario on The Road Ahead includes the following commitments:

- Protecting consumers and small businesses with a price freeze until at least 2006

- Building new generating capacity to increase Ontario's power supply
- Introducing 'Ontario Green Power Bonds' to get governments and the private sector building more clean energy generation
- Closing Ontario's coal-burning power plants
- Leading by example and cutting government's power consumption by 10%
- Encouraging conservation with public education, tax breaks and other incentives

Protecting Consumers

We are committed to protecting consumers from price volatility in the energy market and to ensuring that consumer protection comes first on The Road Ahead. We will —

- Maintain the freeze on electricity rates (4.3 cents per kilowatt-hour) for consumers and small businesses until at least 2006.

The price cap will NOT be lifted until there is sufficient energy supply in Ontario to protect consumers and small businesses from price volatility, and until we know that consumers have the tools necessary to minimize their energy costs.

- Establish simple, straightforward electricity bills. Every consumer in Ontario should be able to understand their electricity bill and easily compare the bills from different suppliers. All bills will use the same language, describe services and charges using the same terms, and spell out the total charges in the same way.

- Provide the independent Ontario Energy Board with sweeping new powers and resources to fulfil its mandate to protect consumers. For example, the Board will have enhanced powers to order compliance and the power to levy administrative penalties for new offences.

- Continue to repay the multi-million dollar debt created by mismanagement and inefficiency at the old Ontario Hydro under previous governments. We will be able to accelerate these payments as soon as new supply is on stream.

Increasing the Supply of Green Energy

We are committed to making Ontario the world leader in the generation of clean energy. To meet that commitment on The Road Ahead, we will:

- Create the extra generating capacity Ontario will need to replace coal-burning plants and meet future demand. For example, we will
 - Expand the Beck Tunnel Project and move forward with the Beck 3 Generating Project, both located in Niagara Falls, for another 700 megawatts of clean energy,
 - Open a new 550-megawatt clean energy generating project on Toronto's Portlands,
 - Support and encourage the Brighton Beach Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (cleanest gas technology) Gas Project, which will add an additional 550 megawatts of capacity,
 - Complete the Bruce 3 and Bruce 4 power generators to add another 1,500 megawatts to our supply;
 - Work with the private sector to develop all of the remaining economic hydro-electric power within Ontario, and
 - Complete the Manitoba-Ontario hydro inter-tie and pursue partnerships with all provinces and American states to obtain a greater supply of clean and affordable electricity.
- Promote and encourage the development of new, green and clean electricity in the province, to meet the needs of Ontarians today and in the future:
 - ***Ontario Green Power Bonds*** to stimulate investment in electricity generation. The provincial government and municipalities will be able to issue tax-free bonds to finance the construction of a local green energy source, such as a windmill. The province will use them to help finance loans at below market rates to companies that want to build or expand clean energy generators. This affordable financing will give private-sector partners confidence and make energy projects more attractive. It will also allow Ontarians to invest directly in creating green energy for their communities and their province.
 - A ***Green Power Standard*** that requires the provincial and municipal governments to set the pace in purchasing their energy from green, clean sources of power. Within five years, 50% of the energy governments in Ontario buy will have to come from such sources.
 - A ***Green Power Purchase Plan*** of electricity from private-sector generators of wind power, hydro-electric power, and the cleanest gas fired combined-cycle gas turbine power plants.

We will also speed up the approvals for construction of new generation and replace red tape with a 'green tape' standard for approving low-risk projects while using tough environmental standards to review higher risk proposals.

- Provide effective tax incentives to power generators who create additional energy supplies using cleaner, alternative and renewable energy sources. That includes everything from natural gas and hydro-electricity to solar and wind power, and waste-based generation.

Industries, small businesses and farmers who build additional clean energy generation will get relief on their corporate income taxes, property taxes, sales taxes AND capital taxes.

- Invest \$20 million to create centres of excellence for Electricity and Alternative Energy Technology to coordinate research and commercialization of projects for more efficient and environmentally friendly energy technologies. Our goal is to make Ontario the North American leader in these fields.

- Cut red tape and remove barriers to the creation of more small-scale generation projects, such as windmills. For example, we will make it easier for Crown land to be used for generating environmentally friendly energy sources such as solar and wind power, and require distributors to offer net metering connections to small-scale and self-generating projects.

- Start right now to close Ontario's coal-burning power plants. Unlike Dalton McGuinty's Liberals, we have a realistic schedule to phase out the use of coal for power by 2015, as recommended by the all-party Select Committee on Alternative Fuel Sources in 2002. This practical deadline will make sure that Ontario is not left short of generating capacity. In the meantime, we are putting stringent emission caps in place for power stations burning fossil fuel that will cut smog and acid-rain causing emissions by 45% by 2010.

Promoting Conservation

Both environmental and financial pressures require us to look at new ways of using less energy, and of generating more of our energy from renewable sources and alternative fuels. To promote conservation, encourage alternative fuels and clean energy production on The Road Ahead, we will —

- Lead by example in reducing energy consumption. We will cut government's overall power consumption by 10%. We will encourage all Ontarians, and all businesses and industries, to learn from and follow our example.

An energy conservation target of 10% will also be put in place for all government transfer partners. A "Green Energy Conservation Fund" will be created to help them meet this target and we'll call on the federal government to participate in this strategy as part of the emission reduction commitments under the Kyoto Protocol.

- Rebate the provincial sales tax on energy efficient light bulbs and on furnaces and air conditioners that meet the ENERGY STAR® standard. This will be in addition to the PST rebate on other appliances that meet this provincial standard for low energy use.
- Increase awareness of the importance of conservation by launching a public education campaign that shows electricity consumers how to reduce their consumption, helping the environment and lowering their electricity bills.

- Enable people and businesses who want to generate their own electricity, through sources such as windmills or waterfalls, to more easily sell that power back to their local utility. This will require 'net meters' to measure the flow of electricity both ways at various times of the day. We'll remove the provincial sales tax on these meters to help encourage more self-generation.

This technology also makes it possible for people to keep track of when they are using the most power, so that they can avoid the peak demand periods.

- Launch an aggressive campaign to encourage conservation by Ontario families and businesses. This will include providing incentives for using less power and for reducing electricity use from the same period a year ago.



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

SMART GROWTH IN ONTARIO

*The Highways and Transit We Need
The Cities and Towns We Want
Environmental Responsibility
Fighting GTA Gridlock*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



How Will We Grow?

Ontario is strong, prosperous and confident. It's inevitable that our province is going to keep on growing – that our cities will get larger, that our towns will spread further out, and that the demand for housing, business and industrial space, and the transportation and transit to tie it all together, will only increase.

That leaves Ontario with two choices. First, do we simply let this growth happen, without any control or plan? Second, if we do decide to manage Ontario's growth, who takes the lead – people or government?

Dalton McGuinty's Liberals say it should be government. They suggest Ontarians have to be told

where they can and cannot live, how much land they are entitled to and, therefore, what type of life their families can have.

We think Ontarians, not their government, are in the best position to make decisions about their own lives – where they live, where they work, how they commute, and where and how they raise their families. Ontarians will create the communities they want to live in and government will support them – not the other way around.

Government's job is to identify the coming centres of growth, to plan and coordinate to meet the new demands, and to protect environmentally sensitive green spaces and agricultural land during the process. It's an approach we call 'Smart Growth'.

How Smart Growth Works

We created groundbreaking Smart Growth Panels for every region of Ontario last year, including one each for the North-western, Northeastern, Western, Eastern and Central regions.

These panels have done an incredible amount of work ... meeting with experts in every aspect of municipal and rural life ... speaking to farmers, business owners, environmentalists and commuters ... hearing from local governments, people, organizations and leaders all over Ontario ... and doing needs assessments of our urban areas, highways and prime farmland.

Through our Smart Growth program, we have looked into the future – where people will be living, working, going to school, driving and much, much more. The results are detailed proposals for making

sure that every part of our province, from rural areas to big cities, will be prepared for future trends and the needs of our people, from the commuting office worker to the family farmer.

We will use the final reports from our Panels to make sure that we have all of the resources ready to meet the demands of the future, from highways to hospitals to schools.

The principles of Smart Growth are simple:

- The people of Ontario will decide where and how they want to live
- It's our job to provide the infrastructure they will need
- Growth can't be allowed to threaten our environment or quality of life
- Hard work and planning today will allow us to meet these challenges tomorrow

Smart Growth for Ontario Cities

Smart Growth is important for Ontario's urban centres, where failure to respond to growth could destroy our quality of life, leading to overcrowding, pollution, crime and the decline of our cities.

Because Ontario's urban centres, and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in particular, are the economic and population hubs of Ontario, we must make sure that they continue to thrive.

Today's urban inconveniences like gridlock will become tomorrow's catastrophes,

unless a comprehensive plan is put in place. For example, currently it takes 90 minutes to drive from Toronto to Hamilton. Without a comprehensive plan, 20 years from now this same drive will take 3 hours!

Not surprisingly, the challenges of growth are the toughest in our biggest urban area. That's why our plan includes special policies just for the GTA. However, we will bring the same kinds of decisive solutions to all of Ontario's urban areas on *The Road Ahead*.

Smart Growth for Rural and Northern Ontario

As the Smart Growth panels produce their final reports, we will be implementing their ideas, based on local input. We do know that our plans for rural and Northern regions of the province will include:

- Creating tax incentive zones to help attract new and growing businesses as well as investment capital. More job-creating businesses will come to or start up in tax incentive zones in order to get the important competitive advantage of tax breaks. That will mean diversification, more economic activity, opportunity and growth in rural and Northern Ontario.
- Improving health care services, with more doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners and hospitals for under-served areas, and allowing nurse practitioners to perform a wider range of services, while maintaining our commitment to small and rural hospitals
- Maintaining educational services with equal funding for pupils across Ontario and \$50 million a year to help keep rural schools open

- Taking over responsibility for municipal bridges in Ontario and ensuring these all-important links between communities are properly maintained
- Preserving our rural heritage with support for Agricultural Fairs, 4-H clubs, snowmobiling, historic communities and rural arena projects
- Supporting Ontario's farmers with a \$2 billion farm support program, a ban on unionizing family farms and a guarantee that small farmers will get the funding they need before nutrient management practices are changed
- Spearheading new economic development programs, including a Northern Ontario Youth Retention Initiative, new tourism and agri-food marketing programs, and development of unused Crown Lands

*You will find details of these and other plans in *The Road Ahead* policy papers for Northern Ontario and Rural Ontario. See the last page for more information.*

Meeting people's needs for the communities and lifestyles they choose doesn't take higher taxes or new bureaucracies. It DOES require an integrated plan for everything from transit and transportation to housing and municipal services.

Our plan to provide the Smart Growth our province needs includes the following commitments:

- Put Smart Growth into action across Ontario, based on local needs for the future
- Protect Ontario's environmental treasures, green spaces and prime agricultural land, and make sure that future growth is environmentally sustainable
- Tackle Ontario's most pressing highway needs RIGHT NOW by building, widening and extending key highways across the province
- Meet Ontario's transit and transportation needs using highways, buses, light rail or whatever works best
- Break the GTA gridlock nightmare with a single, coordinated approach to transportation and transit across the region
- Implement a Riders First Pass that will allow GTA transit users to travel anywhere in the region by paying only once

In order to implement these ideas on The Road Ahead, we will create a powerful Smart Growth Board for each of Ontario's five regions. These Boards will lead the way in putting Smart Growth principles into action, with enough resources to be independent and enough power to get the job done. Among other things, the Boards will have the power to resolve issues before they end up as disputes before the Ontario Municipal Board.

Environmental Responsibility

While some areas of Ontario are destined for growth, others must be protected for both present and future generations. Basically, Smart Growth will identify the areas where we should expect or encourage growth, then protect the rest.

It's important to understand that prohibiting development in sensitive areas means that new homes and businesses will have to be built elsewhere, and that will require new or expanded highways and roads. In other words, environmental concerns have to be integrated into the overall Smart Growth plans on The Road Ahead -

- We will protect Ontario's environmental treasures – like the Oak Ridges Moraine, the Rouge Valley, the Niagara Escarpment and the Lynde Marsh. We will also ensure that future growth occurs in an environmentally sustainable way.
- We will protect Ontario's prime farmland and our rural way of life from excessive development.
- We will simplify Ontario's system for environmental assessments to make sure that projects with serious implications, such as hazardous waste facilities, chemical plants and oil refineries, are ALWAYS subject to full review. Projects with known impacts, such as a dry cleaning shop or a highway widening, would only require detailed notice to the Environment Ministry.

The Highways We Need

As our population continues to grow and our economy continues to expand, the strain on Ontario's highways is becoming a serious concern. Everyone agrees we need more highways and improvements to existing ones, and that we need them as quickly as possible.

While our government has already increased transportation funding in Ontario to record levels (\$1 billion this year alone!), we know that more needs to be done to meet this challenge.

To give Ontarians the highway system they need on The Road Ahead in as short a time as possible, we will –

- Meet the most pressing needs for new highways in Ontario as quickly as possible by tackling projects such as:

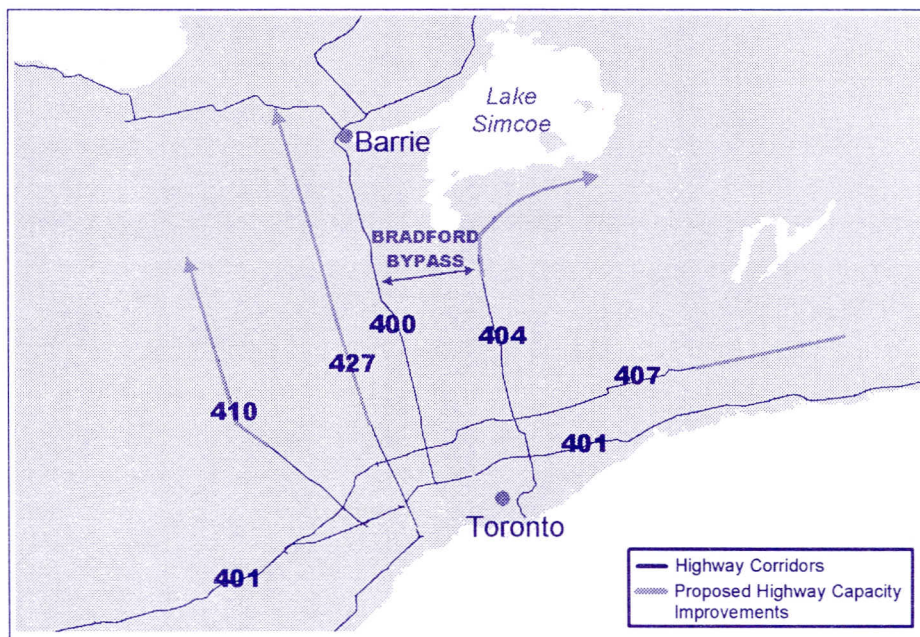
Southern and Central Ontario

- Extend Highway 404 past Lake Simcoe and build the Bradford Bypass

- Complete Highway 407 through Durham to Highway 35/115
- Widen Highway 401 and make safety improvements through Southwestern and Eastern Ontario
- Build a mid-peninsula corridor linking the GTA with Niagara's border crossings, through Halton, Hamilton and the Niagara Peninsula
- Extend Highway 427 past Barrie
- Extend Highway 410 at least to Highway 89

Northern Ontario

- Complete the four-laning of key highways
 - Highway 11 from North Bay to Huntsville
 - Highway 400/69 to Parry Sound
 - Highway 69 from Parry Sound to Sudbury
- Widen key highways and bypasses
 - Highway 11/17 between Thunder Bay and Nipigon
 - Highway 17 between Kenora and the Manitoba border
 - The Sudbury southeast and southwest bypasses
- Upgrade the Thunder Bay Expressway
- Construct the Shabaqua Highway



- Speed up the environmental assessment process without compromising quality by simply holding federal and Ontario assessments at the same time wherever possible. (Thanks to the wide-ranging work of our Smart Growth panels, much of the provincial environmental assessment work has already been done for our priority projects.)
- Learn from other nations around the world that have found ways of building the highways they need faster and more efficiently than we have traditionally done in Ontario. For example, the British Auditor found that when government in Britain built highways, nearly three-quarters of projects ran over budget and 70% were late. When private financing was used, only 22% of projects ran over

budget and a mere 8% were finished late. Penalty and reward clauses built into the contracts created the incentive to keep on budget and on time.

Our government will adopt and adapt these kinds of methods wherever they will be helpful in meeting Ontario's needs while protecting the best interests of users and taxpayers. (See below for an example.)

- Base our province-wide highway construction plan on the principle that everyone is entitled to free access to world-class highways, and that no tolls will be forced on Ontario motorists. Tolls will only be applied to new roads, and only where there is a non-toll alternative.

More Than One Way to Build A Highway

Governments around the world are using innovative financing and partnerships to build their highways. One example that is common throughout Europe and is being adopted for projects in New Brunswick and British Columbia, is Risk Transfer Leasing (RTL).

Instead of government building a highway a bit at a time when it can find the money, a major RTL project is tendered as one big job, from planning to future improvements, over a long term like 30 years. The successful bidder completes the entire project, and takes all the risks along the way. The government still owns the land, and will take possession of the highway when the contract ends, but it leases

the right to USE the highway from the builder.

Government pays the costs off over time, based on how many cars are using the highway and how far they travel. In other words, payments don't start until the highway is ready, and the builder's profit depends on how good a job they do in maintaining and expanding the highway to attract drivers.

Government gets the highway built faster, the builder makes a reasonable profit, and taxpayers avoid any risk of their money. Innovative ideas like this can be a win-win-win.

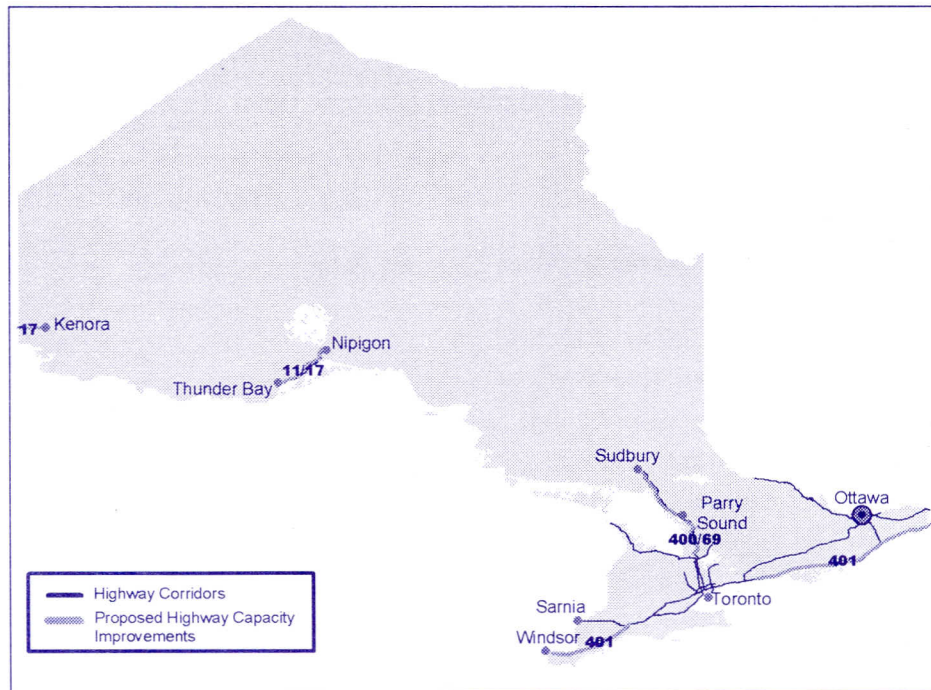
The Public Transit We Need

The more people who choose public transit for getting around our big cities, the more we can spare the environment, reduce congestion, and lower the number of accidents on our roads and highways.

Well-meaning efforts to FORCE people to choose transit over cars are doomed to fail. All they do is create more frustration, delay, pollution and economic damage. It's up to governments to create better transit options to compete against the convenience and speed of personal vehicles.

So that public transit can become the mode of choice in Ontario's big cities on The Road Ahead, we will –

- Tackle our province's biggest public transit challenge first – the Greater Toronto Area. We will build or expand public transit to cover major access corridors in and out of the GTA.



- Start work immediately on the \$200 million first phase of a bus rapid transit system across the Greater Toronto Area;
- Invest \$50 million for York Region's Quick Start program to develop rapid transit in four heavily travelled corridors;
- Invest \$75 million to construct high-occupancy-vehicle lanes on portions of Highway 404 and Highway 403 and bus-bypass shoulders on Highway 403;
- Invest \$430 million to improve GO Transit and other commuter services across the Golden Horseshoe including:
 - modernizing the track and signal infrastructure in the Union Station corridor,
 - adding a third track to sections of the Lakeshore corridor,
 - extending GO train service to Barrie,
 - increasing track capacity in the Georgetown and Milton corridors, and
 - introducing new commuter service to Peterborough, Cambridge, Niagara Falls and Guelph-Kitchener-Waterloo.

The new Central Ontario Smart Growth Board will also design and implement a Riders First Pass that will integrate the fares of all GTA Transit Systems. A passenger will be able to travel on public transit anywhere within the GTA by paying only ONCE. The Board may well decide that fares should be tiered so that a person travelling longer distances would pay a higher fare than somebody travelling a short way.

We will use the lessons learned in this process to tackle the transit challenges of other cities and regions across the province, using our Smart Growth Panel reports as the basis for planning.

- We will change the provincial tax rules – and ask the federal government to do the same – so that transit passes subsidized by employers will not be treated as a taxable benefit. Our government will take the lead in helping get cars off the road and encouraging transit use among our own employees.

Busting GTA Gridlock

In order to ease congestion in our biggest city, now and in the future, we have to use a mixture of improved transit services and highway improvements. This will be a big job, requiring integrated transit and transportation planning for the GTA under one roof, with enough funding and power to tackle the job.

In order to solve GTA gridlock now, and prevent it from recurring on The Road Ahead, we will –

- Mandate the powerful new Smart Growth Board for Central Ontario to immediately tackle GTA gridlock as its first priority. As you can see from our plans for highways and transit outlined in this paper, we will increase the capacity on high volume routes and through the GTA's bottlenecks. We will move quickly, using existing corridors for easily implemented solutions such as express buses travelling on revamped highway shoulders.

In the meantime, we will start the planning, design and construction of the longer-term transit and transportation solutions for the GTA.

- Direct the Central Ontario Smart Growth Board to co-ordinate and integrate the transit systems and the road construction and expansion in the GTA. We will also appoint private sector experts in transportation financing, planning and construction to support the Board.

- Bring all the funding for GTA transit together into a single, \$2 billion commitment to ensure the region's Smart Growth Board has the resources to carry out its important and ambitious mission. The Board will also have the freedom to engage the private sector in innovative financing methods, provided they can make a sound business case for it.

- Triple the fines for drivers who add to the gridlock problem by blocking intersections or parking on major routes during rush hour. Municipalities will be directed to use the extra money from those fines to hire more police and parking control officers to keep the traffic moving.



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

A FAIR DEAL FOR MUNICIPALITIES

*Protection for Taxpayers
A Stronger Voice
Flexible Revenue Sources
Greater Accountability*



A Fair Deal for Municipalities

Many of the important services that Ontarians rely on are provided by municipal governments. Police and fire departments, water, parks and recreation, local roads — municipalities are responsible for these priorities and many others.

Just like the provincial government, municipal governments face the challenging job of providing high quality services and first-class infrastructure at fair and reasonable tax rates. The big difference is that most funding for municipalities comes from property taxes. That means municipal revenues aren't very flexible, considering the needs of vibrant, 21st century communities.

On The Road Ahead, we will offer a Fair Deal for Municipalities. We will let them choose the tools they need to build and sustain strong communities, while continuing to protect taxpayers.

Working with Municipalities

Ontarians pay taxes to several levels of government, and they rightly expect all of these levels to work together in providing good public service. We have worked to disentangle the huge number of services that cross jurisdictional boundaries, to make services more efficient and accountable. We will continue to work with municipalities to meet this challenge on The Road Ahead —

- It's important that the provincial government have a clear picture of the challenges facing municipal leaders, and vice versa.

We will require that the Ontario Cabinet meet at least once per year directly with the leadership of Ontario's cities, towns and regions, led by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, which is made up of the duly elected representatives of Ontario's municipalities.

- One of the requests from municipal leaders is for the province to take over responsibility for municipal bridges. These are vital links between communities, and need to be properly maintained. As part of our 'Fair Deal' arrangement, we will purchase and take responsibility for these bridges across the province.

Local Revenue

Municipal leaders have been asking for greater flexibility in generating the revenue to meet the needs of their residents. We think that decisions about local taxes should be made by the people who live in the municipality, and that taxpayers should not have a higher tax burden imposed on them without their consent.

It's the same logic that led us to create the *Taxpayer Protection Act* that prohibits the provincial government from imposing new taxes or hiking existing taxes without public consent (except for changes that do not increase the overall tax burden).

In order to provide the same kinds of rights and responsibilities to municipalities on The Road Ahead, we will —

- Extend the *Taxpayer Protection Act* to municipalities. Voter approval will be required before a municipal council introduces a new tax or increases the rate of an existing tax. Tax changes that are "revenue neutral" will not be affected. Municipal councils will only have access to new sources of revenue if they comply with the Act.

Also, as a special form of taxpayer protection, if the new revenue comes from only part of the population, then the referendum proposal would need approval from a majority of those directly affected before the measure kicks in.

This will be a landmark change for Ontario taxpayers. We will protect them against increases in their municipal tax burden, just as we have protected them against provincial tax increases.

Your municipal and provincial taxes will only increase with your approval.

This is real democracy in action.

- Allow municipalities to propose new tax ideas to raise money for a specific program or project. These proposals will be subject to the following rules:

- These taxes could be placed on only three activities within the municipality – sales of gasoline, rental of hotel/motel rooms, and use of parking spaces.
- The new revenue would have to be completely dedicated to a legitimate, local municipal need such as building a new arena, expanding a community arts program or re-paving a municipal road.
- The target project or program would have to be clearly identified in the referendum question.
- The municipality would have to clearly account for how the new revenue was being spent (see 'Local Accountability').

Again, under our rules, NO tax will be imposed without the express approval of the majority of voters who live in the municipality. However, if the people of a city or township agree that they would like to raise more money for local needs by one of these methods, they will have the freedom to do so.

Local Accountability

If municipalities are allowed the power to propose new revenue ideas to their residents, they must also accept the responsibility for spending that new money fairly and effectively, and for being more accountable to taxpayers.

As part of the Fair Deal for Municipalities on The Road Ahead, we will –

- Require that any municipality introducing a new tax must show the public how that new money is being spent. There should be detailed, publicly available information on how much money is being collected and where it is going. That information will have to be clear, complete and easily accessible, including a posting on the municipality's website.
- Appoint an ***Ontario Municipal Services Quality Auditor***. This independent official will have the same powers of investigation, auditing and reporting as the Provincial Auditor. The Ontario Municipal Services Quality Auditor will review the spending of large municipalities every year, and look at smaller municipalities (less than 50,000 people) when requested. The Ontario Municipal Services Quality Auditor will be the local taxpayers' watchdog, rooting out waste, mismanagement and inefficiency.

We trust municipal councils, working with the public, to make the decisions that are best for their communities. And we are confident that the Fair Deal for Municipalities will help them grow and prosper on The Road Ahead.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

THE ROAD AHEAD FOR RURAL ONTARIO

*Better Health Care
Support for Schools
Support for Farmers
Preserving Our Rural Heritage*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



The Road Ahead for Rural Ontario

Rural Ontario is made up of smaller communities with unique needs and opportunities. Ontario's rural areas not only provide the agricultural heartland of our province, they offer people a special style and quality of life that deserve celebration and preservation.

We want all Ontarians, and all regions of our province, to benefit from the continued prosperity of our province ... from small towns to big cities, from the Manitoba to the Quebec borders, from Fort Severn to Pelee Island.

Our plan is to build on the strengths of rural Ontario – its strong and proud tradition of hard work and independence, its world-class natural resources, agri-food and tourism industries, and its well-deserved reputation as the heartland of Ontario and home of the core values that built our province.

The results will be an even higher quality of life for rural residents, with better government services, more opportunities and continued respect for our rural heritage and values.

From the family farms and remote communities to the growing cities and towns, our plan to meet the special challenges of rural Ontario and to promote its special advantages includes the following commitments:

- Tax-incentive zones to encourage diversification and economic growth in rural Ontario
- More doctors and nurses for under-served areas
- \$50 million a year to help keep rural schools open
- Providing equal, per-pupil funding to rural and urban school boards
- Taking responsibility for bridges off municipal hands
- A nutrient management funding guarantee for Ontario farmers
- A \$2 billion commitment with Ottawa for farm support

Improving Health Care Services

While our government's efforts at increasing the number of health care professionals and access to services and equipment is helping meet the needs of Ontario's under-served areas, there is still more to do to improve health care services for rural residents.

In addition to the steps we will take across Ontario (see our policy paper on 'Better Health Care for You and Your Family'), on *The Road Ahead*, we will –

- Provide free tuition to students who agree to practise in under-served areas as doctors OR nurses upon graduation to help meet the need for front-line care in these areas.
- Expand the role of nurse practitioners, allowing them to make referrals to specialists and to admit patients to hospital.
- We will meet the need for more hospitals and clinics across Ontario by
 - building new, state of the art public hospitals in fast-growing communities
 - expanding existing facilities where it makes sense and meets people's needs
 - using innovative partnerships and financing to build facilities faster while continuing to cover all of the medical services provided under OHIP

- maintaining our commitment to small and rural hospitals by implementing a Small and Rural Hospitals Strategy
- providing 40 more MRI machines and 50 more CT scanners across Ontario over the next five years
- allowing more private clinics to open and offer high-demand services such as blood tests and dialysis, with services to be covered by OHIP
- We will **guarantee** that waiting times will not exceed medically-recommended limits for general surgery, cataract surgery, cancer treatment, hip and knee replacement and MRI scans. Our waiting time guarantee will apply in every part of the province. We'll do anything needed to meet that guarantee, even flying patients or doctors to or from other cities, provinces or the U.S.
- Use successful programs in London and Windsor, designed to attract more medical interns to practise outside the GTA, as role models for programs in under-served areas across Ontario.
- Negotiate with the federal government a made-for-Ontario immigration agreement that would allow us to fast-track the entry of health professionals who agree to settle in communities where their skills are most needed (see our policy paper on 'A Passport to Ontario').
- Make new health cards available at drivers' licence centres, where photo equipment is already in place, to reduce the waiting time and inconvenience for people in smaller communities.

Smart Growth For Rural Ontario

We created groundbreaking Smart Growth Panels for every region of Ontario last year, including one each for the Northwestern, Northeastern, Southwestern, Eastern and Central parts of the province.

As explained in The Road Ahead policy paper on 'Smart Growth in Ontario', these panels were designed to look into the future – where people will be living, working, going to school, driving and much, much more. The panels have done an incredible amount of work, meeting with experts in every aspect of rural life, and hearing from local governments, people, organizations and leaders all over Ontario.

The results will help make sure that we have all of the resources ready to meet the demands of the future, from highways to hospitals to schools, while safeguarding our environmental treasures and prime farmland.

The idea is that people have the right to decide where and how they want to live. It's then up to government to plan around their needs.

Maintaining Educational Services

Rural Ontario's education system has benefitted from the change to student-based educational funding that provides smaller communities with the same support per-pupil as large cities. While schools in rural areas will continue to benefit from our ongoing educational reforms (see our policy paper on 'Helping Students Achieve Success'), we also recognize that big city solutions don't work in small towns.

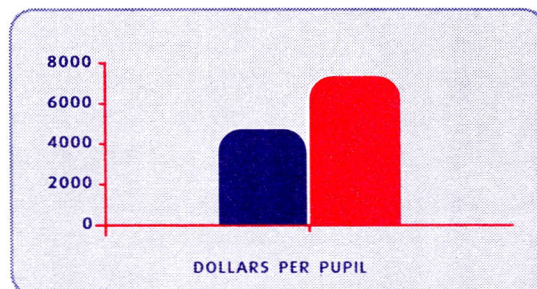
In order to help maintain educational services in rural Ontario on The Road Ahead, we will –

- Fund rural school boards the same as urban school boards on a per-pupil basis. Dalton McGuinty's Liberals would scrap the equal per-pupil funding that gave more money to rural school

boards. On the other hand, we believe it is essential that every child in Ontario have the same opportunity for success, regardless of where they live.

- Provide \$50 million a year to help keep rural schools open. We'll require that funds given to school boards to keep these schools open for the good of the community be used **ONLY** for that express purpose.
- Ensure that every school in rural Ontario continues to have its own secretary. Our Task Force on Education Quality pointed to the important role of school secretaries in providing services to students and parents. We think this is particularly important in rural Ontario, where school boards administer much larger areas and individual school administration plays a bigger role.

PER PUPIL FUNDING BEFORE OUR STUDENT-FOCUSED FUNDING FORMULA



- Ontario's least affluent rural school boards - \$4,800
- Ontario's most affluent urban school boards - \$7,500

Equal Funding for Students

It used to be that students in Toronto or Ottawa got more funding than those in small rural and Northern communities, just because big cities have more large businesses and corporate headquarters paying education property taxes. We made history by introducing funding that was equal for every student across Ontario. We changed that unequal system so that ALL Ontario students could get a good education, regardless of how much or little property tax their parents pay.

Urban or rural, north or south, public or separate, English or French – for the first time, all Ontario students now have equal funding and an equal opportunity to succeed.

Dalton McGuinty's Liberals voted against equal funding and want to return to the old system. The recent Rozanski Task Force spoke to 500 groups concerned about education across the province and heard loudly and clearly that per-pupil funding works—people don't want to go back to the old days of unfair funding and high local taxes.

Preserving Our Rural Heritage

Many people choose to live in rural Ontario for the quality of life it offers them and their families, and for the wide range of lifestyles possible in smaller communities with closer links to the natural environment.

In order to help preserve and celebrate these advantages of life in rural Ontario on The Road Ahead, we will –

- Help rural municipalities by taking over responsibility for the maintenance and reconstruction of municipal bridges across Ontario. We will purchase these bridges from municipal governments and ensure these vital links between communities are properly maintained. These bridges represent a significant cost to rural municipalities but a significant benefit to most of Ontario. It only makes sense to have the provincial government take responsibility for this important infrastructure.

(Our policy paper on 'A Fair Deal for Municipalities' also explains how we will give all municipalities in Ontario a stronger voice in the future, greater protection for taxpayers, more flexibility to generate local revenue, and more accountability for the public funds they raise and spend.)

- Refuse to waste the time of our police and busy courts with prosecutions under the federal Liberals' over-priced, ineffective gun registry boondoggle. Instead of harassing law-abiding hunters, farmers and sports shooters, we will continue to focus on real gun crimes and to press Ottawa to spend that money on effective measures such as combating gun smuggling and theft, and keeping gun-using criminals behind bars.

We will concentrate on fighting gun-related crime and NOT harassing law-abiding gun owners. Federal paperwork and registration rules will NOT be a priority for provincial prosecutors.

- Preserve Ontario's Agricultural Fairs by increasing funding to the societies that organize them. The enhanced funding would reflect increased costs of running the fairs and obtaining liability insurance.
- Protect the opportunity of every rural child to participate in 4-H by providing 4-H Ontario with funding to help allow them to operate this important program permanently.
- Develop an Ontario Recreational Trails Strategy intended to keep these trails economically sustainable while encouraging four-season use. Key objectives of the strategy will be to address landowner concerns and protect safety, the environment and our cultural heritage while promoting tourism at the same time.
- Include snowmobiles in the auto insurance review. The review will examine how to reduce risk factors and make snowmobile insurance more affordable.
- Create a new program to help repair and maintain rural Ontario's arenas. These arenas are more than just a place to play hockey, they are often centres of communities and the locations for arts and cultural affairs, children's services, community gatherings and other important activities. Under our new program, the Government of Ontario will match locally raised funds up to a maximum of \$50,000 per year.
- Help preserve the identities of Ontario's historic communities. As municipalities expand or come together to streamline their operations and services, we will support local groups working to make sure that the identities of historic communities are not forgotten.
- Create **tax incentive zones** in rural areas to help attract new and growing businesses as well as

investment capital. Job-creating businesses will come to or start up in these zones in order to get the important competitive advantage of tax breaks. That will mean diversification and more economic activity, opportunity and growth across rural Ontario.

Supporting Ontario's Farmers

In this changing world of international trade rulings, new technologies and constant environmental challenges, Ontario's farmers need to know they can count on government's support to help them adapt and thrive. On The Road Ahead, we will adopt a '**made in Ontario' agricultural policy** to -

- Give farmers the support they have asked for to ensure a good system of nutrient management across Ontario. We guarantee that Ontario's farmers will NOT be forced to implement nutrient management programs until the funding is in place to cover a portion of the costs for farms (including support for the costs of well-capping).

Our government will also work with municipalities to make sure the new system of water safety is fair and affordable.

- Partner with the federal government to invest \$2 billion in farm support over the next five years. This safety net funding will give Ontario's farmers the certainty they need to make investments of their time, energy and savings in maintaining and improving their operations.
- Build on Ontario's status as a leader in the science of bio-products by -
 - Requiring that gasoline sold in Ontario contain 5% ethanol by 2007 and 10% by 2010, and establishing minimums for the amount of "bio-diesel" contained in diesel,

- guaranteeing tax exemptions to ethanol and biodiesel manufacturers for a period of time sufficient for them to protect their investments,
- giving first priority to Ontario corn and other raw materials in the manufacturing of ethanol, and
- creating a Bio-Products Research Institute to supplement our Alternative Fuels Research Fund and help boost the development of ALL bio-products and technologies.
- Never allow farms to be unionized or face potentially devastating labour disruptions. Dalton McGuinty's Liberals would let unions have free access to farms and unionize them. We oppose this threat to family farms and the agricultural sector.
- Continue to strengthen and modernize Ontario's science-based food safety system. Ontario's consumers and customers demand the highest quality and safest food. We are working with the agri-food sector to implement our legislation that will update standards and inspection programs, provide better training to food handlers and increase efforts to educate the public. Our mutual plan will minimize both economic and public health risks.
- Provide more support and encouragement for woodlot management. We will reduce the threshold for the Managed Forest Tax Rebate to two acres, offering protection for smaller woodlots and allowing more property owners to be rewarded for helping maintain Ontario's trees.
- Support research that will offer farmers stronger crops and higher yields. In this changing world of international trade rulings, new technologies and constant environmental challenges, Ontario's farmers need to know they can count on government's support to help them adapt and thrive.
- Work to enhance the reputation of foods produced in Ontario through provincial marketing programs. We will expand the Foodland Ontario system of identifying Ontario produce to more food and agricultural products, so that it will be easier for consumers to 'buy Ontario'.



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

THE ROAD AHEAD FOR NORTHERN ONTARIO

*A Stronger Voice
A Stronger Economy
Better Health Care
Support for Schools
Safe Communities*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



Northern Ontario

For many people in the southern and central areas of Ontario, it is difficult to grasp the size, diversity and challenges of Northern Ontario. Far larger, but less populated, than other parts of our province, and with an economy in the midst of broadening from its natural resources base, Ontario's North has unique needs. The biggest challenge facing Northern Ontario is the ongoing loss of its most valuable natural resource – its people.

In order to help the North and its people improve their everyday lives and stay in the North, our plan includes the following commitments:

Listening to Northerners

- Young people from Northern Ontario will be asked to provide advice to the government on the key challenges facing them and their communities. These “Northerners providing northern solutions” will have the opportunity to speak directly to Cabinet.
- We will hold a Cabinet meeting in Northern Ontario at least once every year. Community leaders, interest groups and ordinary citizens would be able to attend these meetings and make presentations directly to the Premier and Cabinet Ministers. We want to ensure that the government's key decision makers have firsthand experience with the largest part of our province.
- We will be following through on the advice of our Northern Ontario Smart Growth Panels (see below) to plan for the future needs of the North.

Smart Growth For Northern Ontario

We created groundbreaking Smart Growth Panels for every region of Ontario last year, including one each for the Northwestern and Northeastern regions.

As explained in The Road Ahead policy paper on ‘Smart Growth in Ontario’, these panels were designed to look into the future – where people will be living, working, going to school, driving and much, much more. The panels have done an incredible amount of work, meeting with experts in every aspect of rural and urban life, and hearing from local governments, people, organizations and leaders all over Ontario.

The results will help make sure that we have all of the resources ready to meet the demands of the future, from highways to hospitals to schools, while safeguarding our environmental treasures and prime farmland.

The idea is that people have the right to decide where and how they want to live. It's then up to government to plan around their needs.

Supporting the Northern Economy

- Create a **Northern Youth Retention Initiative** to help provide youth in the North with equal employment opportunities and encourage them to live and work in their own communities. We will invest \$9 million over three years through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund to provide career-related job opportunities, summer employment and co-operative education placements – all designed to foster youth retention.
- Create a tax incentive zone covering all of the North to help attract new and growing businesses as well as investment capital. More job-creating businesses will come to or start up in Northern Ontario in order to get the important competitive advantage of tax breaks. That will mean greater diversification and more economic activity, opportunity and growth for the North.
- Invest \$370 million this year alone in major improvements to the highway system in Northern Ontario. This will include projects such as:

- Completing the four-laning of key highways:
 - Highway 11 from North Bay to Huntsville
 - Highway 400/69 to Parry Sound
 - Highway 69 from Parry Sound to Sudbury
- Widening key highways and bypasses:
 - Highway 11/17 between Thunder Bay and Nipigon
 - Highway 17 between Kenora and the Manitoba border
 - The Sudbury southeast and southwest bypasses
- Upgrading the Thunder Bay Expressway
- Constructing the Shabaqua Highway

By making it easier for goods, services and people to get around the North, we are providing one of the building blocks for economic growth.

The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund

Unlike Dalton McGuinty's Liberals, who believe in corporate hand-outs that benefit one company at the expense of others, we think economic development aid should apply fairly, to entire sectors or entire regions. That's how the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund has operated in the North – supporting or financing projects that help whole communities or that support entire sectors of the economy.

Since 1996, communities across Northern Ontario have created some 18,000 jobs through more than 1,400 initiatives, thanks to \$497 million from the NOHFC and an additional \$1.2 billion from project partners

Recognizing the vital role of the Heritage Fund to Northern Ontario, we are doubling funding for the NOHFC to \$60 million per year to ensure northern communities are full participants in Ontario's strong economy.

- Spearhead the creation of a special fund to help market Northern Ontario as a world-class destination for tourism, eco-tourism, cultural experiences and outdoor adventure. We will partner with the federal government and with local and regional governments to help tell the world about the wonders of the North.

- Help Northern municipalities by taking over responsibility for the maintenance and reconstruction of municipal bridges across Ontario. We will purchase these bridges from municipal governments and ensure these vital links between communities are properly maintained. These bridges represent a significant cost to municipalities but a significant benefit to Ontario as a whole. It only makes sense to have the provincial government take responsibility for this important infrastructure.

(Our policy paper on 'A Fair Deal for Municipalities' also explains how we will give all municipalities in Ontario a stronger voice in the future, greater taxpayer protection, more flexibility to generate local revenue, and more accountability for the public funds they raise and spend.)

- Create an important new tourism destination by combining protected coastal areas of Ontario, including the North, as the Great Lakes Heritage Coast. This new protected area under Ontario's Living Legacy would provide a unique experience to visitors from around the world and help bring tourism dollars into a large number of Northern communities.

- Undertake a comprehensive consultation, led by the Minister of Tourism, with all the stakeholders to put the snowmobiling industry back on solid ground. The two primary goals will be to establish fairness in the cost of personal and commercial insurance, and to ensure the sustainability, comprehensiveness and safety of the network of trails.

- Make unprotected Crown Land in Northern Ontario available to residents for economic development purposes. We will be open to suggestions for any environmentally responsible and economically viable ideas, from cottage lot development to parks and recreation areas.

- Complete the Manitoba-Ontario hydro inter-tie, as part of our agreement with our western neighbour to help meet Ontario's growing energy needs. This project will help create hundreds of construction jobs and bring economic activity to the Northwest region for 10 years.

- We will support the Community Fisheries and Wildlife Improvement Program to encourage community involvement in preserving our natural resources. Under this program, we give funding and other support to community-based organizations ranging from Scouts and 4H Clubs to trappers' councils and naturalists' groups for local initiatives that benefit fish, wildlife or their habitats.

We will give funding priority to projects aimed at restoring streams to cold water status, particularly those that involve youth in learning about fisheries management. Ontario needs the next generation to help preserve fish species for ecological and tourism purposes in the future.

Essential Services for the North

You'll find our detailed plans for health care, education and the safety and security of Ontario in our series of The Road Ahead Policy Papers (see page 8 for a listing of these Papers and how to get your free copies). There are a few measures, however, that will be of particular benefit to the people of Northern Ontario on The Road Ahead -

HEALTH CARE

The longer travel times, more scattered populations and a lack of medical professionals in some communities make providing health care in Northern Ontario more challenging. However, our investments in retention and recruitment to bring more specialists and nurse practitioners to the North, and in providing greater emergency access to physicians and hospitals, are helping to meet that challenge.

Our key commitments to providing better health care for Northern Ontario on The Road Ahead include:

- Medical students who agree to practise in under-served areas upon graduation will be granted free tuition through medical school
- Medical students who choose to go into primary care family practice anywhere in the province will have their tuition costs repaid (or forgiven, if they used our student loan program)
- We are building Ontario's first medical school in 30 years to increase medical student enrolment. The school is being built on two campuses in Northern Ontario in order to create a pool of new physicians with experience and roots in the North. Studies have shown that most doctors will practise where they trained.
- We will allow nurse practitioners to make referrals to specialists and to admit patients to hospitals. This will help increase access to services and reduce waiting times in many parts of Ontario.
- Nursing students who are willing to work in under-served areas upon graduation will be offered free tuition for their university nursing degrees.
- We will establish a province-wide placement system to match nurses to vacancies and offer updated information on opportunities on the Internet. The goal will be a full-time position for every nurse who wants one.
- We will fund 40 more MRI machines and 50 more CT scanners at hospitals and clinics across the province over the next five years.
- We will maintain our commitment to keeping small and rural hospitals open, and implement a Small and Rural Hospitals Strategy.
- We will negotiate with the federal government a made-for-Ontario immigration agreement that would allow us to fast-track the entry of health professionals who agree to settle in communities where their skills are most needed.

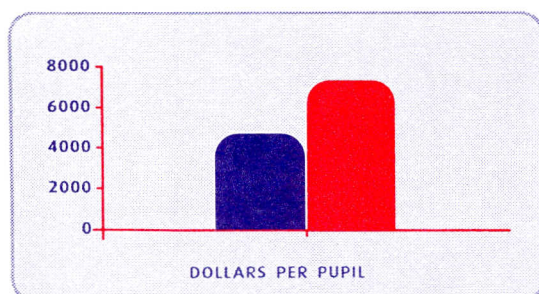
- To support the health care needs of children in the north, we will invest nearly \$6.5 million to support the Electronic Child Health Network North, providing an electronic link between health care professionals and families in the north, and hundreds of pediatricians and health care professionals in southern Ontario.

- We will make new health cards available at driver's licence centres, where photo equipment is already in place, to reduce the waiting time and inconvenience for people in smaller communities.

EDUCATION

We're proud to have brought more support to Northern Ontario's education system, from colleges and universities to elementary and secondary schools. Our historic reforms to education funding levelled the playing field in Ontario, ensuring that students in a small Northern town got the same funding as those in a wealthy suburb of Toronto. While Dalton McGuinty's Liberals would undo those reforms and return to unequal student funding, we are committed to fairness and to ensuring every student has an equal opportunity for success.

PER PUPIL FUNDING BEFORE OUR STUDENT-FOCUSED FUNDING FORMULA



- Ontario's least affluent rural school boards - \$4,800
- Ontario's most affluent urban school boards - \$7,500

Our key commitments to helping students in the North achieve success on The Road Ahead include:

- We are investing \$50 million a year into a new program to help keep rural schools open.

- We will make e-learning opportunities and technologies more available, and make better use of existing programs through TV Ontario and Contact North.

- We will support publicly-funded **Innovation Schools** within the public and separate school systems. Each Innovation School would operate within the current system, directly funded by government based on the number of students enrolled, but would offer unique programs or teaching.

- We will allow internationally based schools to offer university programs and to grant degrees here, as long as they meet strict Ontario standards. We will encourage these new facilities to locate in areas of our province where post-secondary education is not easily available right now.

- We will provide \$10 million a year to northern colleges and those serving rural communities, and another \$6 million a year to northern universities, to help them deal with their unique financial challenges.

Equal Funding for Students

It used to be that students in Toronto or Ottawa got more funding than those in a small community in Northern Ontario, just because big cities have more large businesses and corporate headquarters paying local taxes.

We made history by introducing funding that was equal for every student across Ontario. We changed that unequal system so that ALL Ontario students could get a good education, regardless of how much or little property tax their parents pay.

Urban or rural, north or south, public or separate, English or French – for the first time, all Ontario students now have equal funding and an equal opportunity to succeed.

Dalton McGuinty's Liberals voted against equal funding and want to return to the old system. The recent Education Quality Task Force spoke to 500 groups concerned about education across the province and heard loudly and clearly that per-pupil funding works - people don't want to go back to the old days of unfair funding and high local taxes.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Ontario's justice system has to take into account the more rural and traditional lifestyles of much of Northern Ontario, while still providing Northerners with the strong protection they deserve for their communities and families.

Our key commitments to providing safe communities within a secure Northern Ontario include:

- We will double the resources for the front-line fight against child pornography, and share the expertise of the OPP on these crimes with municipal police forces across the province.
- We are hiring at least 1,000 new front-line police officers and at least 100 new probation and parole officers across the province.
- We will expand our Elder Abuse Strategy to ensure there are specialized victim services available for seniors, and that they are linked to community victim services throughout Ontario.
- We will expand our community-based victims' services across Ontario, with the goal of having local services easily available for every Ontarian, no matter where they live.
- We will refuse to waste the time of our police and busy courts with prosecutions under the federal Liberals' over-priced, ineffective gun registry boondoggle. Instead of harassing law-abiding hunters, farmers and sports shooters, we will continue to focus on real gun crimes and to press Ottawa to spend that money on effective measures such as combating gun smuggling and theft, and keeping gun-using criminals behind bars.

We will concentrate on fighting gun-related crime and NOT harassing law-abiding gun owners. Federal paperwork and registration rules will NOT be a priority for provincial prosecutors.

- We will develop standards for a unified, province-wide information sharing system for municipal police forces and the OPP, and require all Ontario police to be using the system within five years.

- We will develop an Ontario Recreational Trails Strategy intended to keep these trails economically sustainable while encouraging four-season use. Key objectives of the strategy will be to address landowner concerns and protect safety, the environment and our cultural heritage while promoting tourism at the same time.

- We will include snowmobiles in the auto insurance review. The review will examine how to reduce risk factors and make snowmobile insurance more affordable.

- We will create a new program to help repair and maintain rural Ontario's arenas. These arenas are more than just a place to play hockey, they are often centres of communities and the locations for arts and cultural affairs, children's services, community gatherings and other important activities. Under our new program, the Government of Ontario will match locally raised funds up to a maximum of \$50,000 per year.

- We will help preserve the identities of Ontario's historic communities. As municipalities expand or come together to streamline their operations and services, we will support local groups working to make sure that the identities of historic communities are not forgotten.



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

PROVIDING A HAND UP

*Cracking Down on Welfare Fraud
More Benefits to the Disabled
Responsible Care for the Homeless*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



A Hand Up, Not a Handout

Back in 1995, Ontario had 1.3 million people on welfare. About one in eight Ontarians was dependent on social assistance, more per capita than any other province.

Today, Ontario's welfare rolls have been cut almost in half, and those receiving assistance are required to work, train or learn towards getting a full-time job again. That's why our social assistance plan for able-bodied adults is now called 'Ontario Works'.

Our reforms are working –

- A City of Toronto study found that 83% of those who went through the Ontario Works program were still off welfare, 70% reported high job satisfaction, and they were making an average of twice the minimum wage in their new jobs.
- Statistics Canada reports that Ontario ranks first in the country for the average family wage of people who get off welfare, and second only to Alberta for the number of people who STAY off welfare.

In order to continue our successful campaign to use the welfare system as a hand up instead of a hand-out on The Road Ahead, we will –

Make the System More Accountable

The social assistance system should be more accountable to everyone involved in it, including the people who foot the bill – Ontario's taxpayers.

We will continue to crack down on welfare fraud, and reinvest the savings in benefits for children and the disabled.

We will also crack down on those who abuse both our immigration system and our welfare system, leaving honest citizens who require help to suffer the consequences. Sponsoring an immigrant to Canada means taking financial responsibility for that person. For example, you must be able to guarantee you will support them if they cannot find work. Obviously, people on social assistance are in no position to make such a guarantee.

Under the new immigration arrangement, we will negotiate with the federal government (see The Road Ahead policy paper on "A Passport to Ontario"), we will prohibit social assistance recipients from sponsoring immigrants to Canada. Similarly, we will crack down on individuals who enter the country illegally and try to take advantage of our health care and welfare services, since these people only take money away from those who really need it.

The Welfare Fraud Story

When we promised to crack down on welfare fraud, the Liberals and NDP predicted we would find only a handful of cases.

In fact, our tougher enforcement of the rules is saving taxpayers about \$40 million a year!

Now, we will use those substantial savings to increase support payments for disabled people, who truly are unable to work.

Help Those Who Need Support

While our ongoing Ontario Works program and our plan for continued job growth will help many unemployed people to get back on their feet (see our policy paper on 'Keeping Our Economy Strong'), others need extra help to cope with disabilities, to turn their lives around, or to deal with addiction or mental illnesses.

- We will increase social assistance support for children with a new **Ontario Child Benefit**, effectively taking Ontario children off welfare and giving them a higher benefit designed to meet their needs. Unlike adults, children on social assistance cannot provide for themselves by getting a job. They should not be subject to the stigma of being 'on welfare'.

Under the Ontario Child Benefit, a family on social assistance with one child would receive nearly \$1,500 more per year. A second child in the family would increase their annual benefits by almost \$1,300, and each additional child would mean about \$1,200 more per year. This is money that parents or guardians can use to better provide for children on social assistance.

- Whether born with disabilities or rendered unable to work by illness or injury, some Ontarians simply cannot work and need our society's help. We will

increase the support for our most vulnerable citizens by hiking our payments to disabled persons who are unable to work by 5% immediately, helping them meet the increased cost of living and improve their quality of life.

The funds for this and future increases in **Ontario Disability Support Program** benefits will be taken directly from the savings we have made through cracking down on fraud and abuse of the system. We are taking from those who refuse to play by the rules and giving more to those truly unable to work.

- Different challenges require different solutions, but we will ensure that the necessary health care services, detox and addiction treatment beds, emergency shelters and drop-in agencies are available to those who require them.
- While these short-term programs are invaluable, Ontario also needs sustainable strategies to keep people who suffer from mental illness on solid footing.
 - We will dedicate more resources to help people with mental illnesses lead happy and productive lives.
 - We will expand case-management services to increase the focus on long-term solutions for people who are chronically homeless.

(All told, our government will invest \$250 million over the next five years in mental health care reform, including a public education campaign to build awareness and understanding, and to combat the stigma of mental illness.)

- Our significant investments in mental health and addiction treatment services are only part of the solution. In order to be truly effective and compassionate, we will bring 'responsible care' to the homeless to make sure that those who require care and support are actually receiving it.

To help reach out to these people in need, we will increase our funding of the Shared Care Teams (teams of outreach workers, nurses and physicians supported by psychiatrists) that bring health and mental health services to homeless people.

Shared Care teams will be directed to make sure that people without a place to stay get the care they need, whether it's medical attention, addiction treatment or a shelter bed. When cold weather alerts are issued in Ontario communities, people living on the streets **MUST** be provided with adequate shelters, and should not be allowed to sleep outdoors.

Legislation will give the Shared Care Teams the power to remove people from the streets and take them into care when, in the Teams' opinion, it is necessary for their protection. Allowing people to suffer frostbite or death by exposure is cruelty, not compassion. The police would be called in only as a last resort if necessary to protect the individual or members of the team.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

A PASSPORT TO ONTARIO

*A Made-for-Ontario Immigration System
Better Security at Our Border
The Skilled People We Need
Fighting Fraud and Abuse*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



Passport to Ontario

Ontario is one of the most culturally diverse places on the planet. We come from 120 different countries and speak 60 different languages. Except for the First Nations, all of us are within a few years or generations of being immigrants to this province.

This diversity is an incredible source of strength and opportunity. Ontario — home to 60% of the newcomers to Canada — has benefited enormously from immigration. We continue to welcome the experiences and skills that new Canadians bring and the contributions they will make.

Because immigration is so important to this province — indeed, vital to its future — Ontario deserves a hand in shaping the policies that bring newcomers here. Quebec and the federal government have already negotiated a special agreement governing immigration to that province. Several other provinces also have agreements with Ottawa.

On The Road Ahead, we will negotiate our own immigration agreement with the federal government, using that made-for-Ontario agreement to achieve the following:

- Ensure that more new immigrants to Ontario settle outside the GTA to help meet the need for skilled labour across the province
- Test potential immigrants BEFORE they come to Ontario to identify those with the skills and qualifications our province needs most — using Ontario standards as the benchmark
- Giving first priority to fully-trained medical professionals, business investors and skilled labourers who are willing to settle where the need for their services is greatest

- Do a much better job than Ottawa has of screening for security risks, including people tied to terrorist or criminal organizations, those who have been previously deported, and anyone else who poses a security threat

- Create an integrated Security Perimeter Strategy that will help protect North America while keeping our vital trade links with the U.S. open

- End free legal aid for immigration and refugee cases. Stop illegal immigrants from using OHIP. Prevent welfare recipients from sponsoring immigrants.

- Allow 'special circumstances family reunification' for immigrants who normally would not qualify under Ontario rules, but whose families have agreed to provide for their needs.

Bringing Good People Into Ontario

The vast majority of immigrants to Ontario are decent, hardworking people — just like the past generations that have built our great province. By looking carefully at the kinds of people we need to improve our economy and quality of life, we can then choose from among the tremendous number of people eager to immigrate to Ontario to find those best suited to be successful and happy here.

In order to bring more good people into Ontario on The Road Ahead, we will —

- Direct more newcomers towards settling in the communities outside the Greater Toronto Area, where their contribution is most needed. Sixty per cent of all immigrants to Canada come to Ontario, and 82% of them settle in the GTA. We want to ensure that other regions of the province have an opportunity to benefit from the special skills that new Canadians bring.

To that end, we will work with municipal leaders, business and employer representatives, and labour market experts to identify the needs in Ontario's communities, so that we can target places that would benefit from the contribution of skilled labour. From skilled auto workers in Windsor to x-ray technicians in Thunder Bay, we can help newcomers to Ontario find the places where they will receive a warm welcome and a good job.

- We will test would-be immigrants to identify those who possess the skills and qualifications that our province most needs, such as business investors and medical professionals, using Ontario standards as the benchmark.

- We will give top priority to the skilled people Ontario needs, particularly those who commit to settle in communities where they are most needed. As a condition of entry and continued residence, new Ontarians who come here under those terms would sign formal agreements to live in these communities for a minimum amount of time.

We will also continue to search out and encourage business investors to bring their important skills and investments to Ontario.

- We will accredit would-be immigrants BEFORE they come to Ontario. This way, new immigrants will be sure they qualify for their chosen profession before uprooting their families and risking a trip to Ontario. It also means that they will be able to work as soon as they get here, a fact that is especially important to employers and communities now facing skills shortages. Immigrants who have the most needed skills and experience (for example, nurses) would have their immigration approval fast-tracked.

- We will make screening for security and testing for qualifications the responsibility of Ontario officials stationed in countries from which most newcomers emigrate. We need Ontario representatives doing our work, rather than relying exclusively on locally hired agents. This is the only way to guarantee the integrity of our entry system.

- By focusing on immigrants who possess the skills employers need and are eager to contribute to our communities, and by screening out security threats before they arrive in Ontario, we will reduce the strain on our social services and law enforcement. The resulting cost savings will be reinvested in stationing Ontario immigration officials abroad.

- Ontario's immigration officials will also serve as recruiters, promoting the advantages and opportunities of our province, and helping to attract skilled workers to the Ontario communities that need them.

- We will allow 'special circumstances' family reunification. Immigration policy is more than attracting people with skills or screening for security risks ... it is also about ordinary people and their families. We do not want our strict new criteria for immigration to Ontario to prevent families from being able to sponsor relatives who may not otherwise qualify because of their age or lack of job skills. For immigrants who would not otherwise qualify, we will allow 'special circumstances' family reunification, provided that the Ontario family members agree to take responsibility for the newcomer's care and well-being.

Keeping Bad People Out of Ontario

Like all North Americans, Ontarians are concerned about the security of their territory from terrorists and international criminal organizations. There is absolutely no doubt that the federal Liberals have not done an adequate job of keeping criminal elements and potential terrorists out of our country. Ontario ends up taking the bulk of new immigrants to Canada and has to deal with the consequences of Ottawa's slack immigration policies. That's another reason we need a 'made-for-Ontario' immigration agreement.

In order to do a better job of keeping criminals and terrorists out of Ontario on The Road Ahead, we will

- Increase security screening of potential immigrants, including refugees. We will deny entry to persons who are tied to terrorist organizations, who

have previously been deported or otherwise pose a security threat. For the sake of Ontario's security, we will employ rigorous background checks and zero tolerance policies for terrorism or criminal threats.

The federal government uses a very weak standard to define 'terrorist organization', and a lot of potentially dangerous groups and people are getting through that loophole. For example, for years the federal government refused to recognize Hezbollah as a terrorist group, despite the fact that its members killed 240 American Marines by bombing the US embassy in Beirut, and continue to fire missiles at Israel.

Under our made-for-Ontario immigration system, we will use the much tougher definition of terrorism employed by our NATO allies, such as Britain.

The Need For Better Security Screening

When it comes to our security, we cannot be too careful. We want to avoid embarrassing cases like that of Ahmed Ressam, the man convicted of trying to blow up Los Angeles International Airport, who entered the United States from Canada.

Ressam, who has been linked to Osama bin Laden, landed at Mirabel Airport with an obviously fake French passport (the photo didn't even fit properly inside). He admitted to Canadian authorities that he had been accused of terrorist activities in Algeria and also accused of arms trafficking. Federal immigration officials let him in anyway.

Ressam went on to break our laws, collect welfare, disappear, then resurface with a Canadian passport which he used to get into the United States for his airport bombing scheme.

Federal Liberal Cabinet Minister Elinor Caplan later appeared on American television to justify the handling of the Ressam scandal. During the interview she defended the federal policy that presenting a false passport, "in itself, is not enough for us to immediately detain that person."

- Under the new immigration system that we will negotiate with Ottawa, we would have the right to set up our own security measures and strategies.

We will work with the federal and U.S. governments, and all willing international partners, to bring in an integrated Security Perimeter Strategy that will help protect North America while keeping our vital trade links with the U.S. open and working smoothly. The strategy would include all of the previous points in this section, along with new, coordinated actions at home and abroad:

- Better security measures overseas at places where people are departing for North America. This would include using new face-recognition technology to build up a database of known and suspected terrorists and international criminals, a common system for travel documents to help prevent forgery and people using multiple identities, tougher security clearances for people working at critical facilities like airports, and strict new international standards for security of seaports and containers shipped by sea.
- Better security at all the points of entry into North America. Again, this would include using the new face recognition technology, as well as developing common rules for not admitting people with improper documents and deporting people who are criminal or security risks, dealing quickly and safely with possible security risks, using the 'safe third country' rules for refugee and asylum seekers, and ending the power of our federal government to override security rulings about letting individuals into North America.
- More cooperation and information sharing between police and security organizations. This would include joint intelligence sharing and

enforcement operations to prevent suspected terrorists from entering our partners' territory, interfacing of criminal/intelligence information networks, letting each other know about thefts of identity documents, and joint priority efforts to counter people smuggling between jurisdictions including tough mandatory penalties for convicted smugglers.

- Special measures at the Canada – U.S. border. These would include the kinds of cooperation and extra safeguards described above, as well as a program for permitting pre-border clearance of cargo shipments in containers (using tamper proof seals), allowing each other's Customs Agents to cross the border when necessary, building and improving border facilities where needed, and using remote technologies to help monitor the world's longest undefended border.
- Create a Fugitive Squad to identify, track down and apprehend fugitives within Ontario. This will be based on an expansion of the ROPE (Repeat Offender Parole Enforcement) program used by the Ontario Provincial Police to track down parole violators and repeat offenders.

Federal Fugitives On The Loose

Earlier this year, the federal Auditor General reported that there are as many as **36,000** deportees loose in the country. These are people who were ordered deported then lost track of by Ottawa.

These deportees are in addition to some **500** fugitives from federal bail, parole and custody (prison escapees, etc.) on the loose in Ontario on any given day.

- Introduce a special program to identify people living in Ontario who are wanted on international arrest warrants, including those who are currently in jail or in prison in our province. We will then direct whatever resources are needed to have those people brought before federal authorities and deported to face justice as quickly as possible.

- Demand that the federal government listen to the experts and bring in a law that makes membership in any identified criminal or terrorist organization a crime with a hefty sentence. Prosecutors would not have to prove the individual committed a crime, only that he or she belongs to the outlaw motorcycle gang, organized crime group or terrorist organization. This new law should also include the power to seize the assets of these organizations, hitting them directly in the pocket book.

Stopping People from Taking Advantage of Ontario

Ontario's prosperity and Canada's open immigration policies mean that some people come to our province in order to take advantage of Ontario's public services. We will welcome legitimate, law-abiding immigrants with open arms, as Ontario has always done. We will not treat immigrants like criminals, but we will no longer treat criminals like legitimate immigrants.

In order to stop people from taking advantage of Ontario on The Road Ahead, we will –

- Prevent people on welfare from sponsoring other immigrants, and make sure that sponsors are able to provide financially for those for whom they vouch. (See our policy paper on 'Providing A Hand Up')

- Prevent people who are in Ontario illegally from obtaining free health care at taxpayer expense. OHIP is intended for legitimate Ontario residents only, not those who sneak into the country or refuse to leave it when ordered to do so.

- Stop providing free legal aid to people making immigration and refugee claims or challenges, and for refugees facing criminal charges.

Right now, immigration and refugee claims use up 11% of our funding for Legal Aid. We will stop providing this service. If it wishes, the federal government can choose to provide its own legal aid to those who are making claims on the federal system under federal laws. By the same token, we will leave it up to Ottawa to cover the cost of defending refugees against criminal charges, since they were allowed into the country under the federal government's lax immigration rules.

Ontario will no longer provide Legal Aid in these cases. We will take the resulting savings and re-invest them in the Legal Aid system to provide more help for Ontario citizens.

Fair Funding from Ottawa

One of the keys to our plan to negotiate a made for Ontario immigration system is to obtain fair levels of federal funding for immigration services. Ontario takes the bulk of Canada's immigration flow, but does not receive enough federal funding to make up for the costs of the re-settlement services, language instruction and skills training these newcomers need. Our Passport to Ontario agreement with Ottawa would have to include fair funding, on the same per person basis as that received by Quebec to support its immigrant population.



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

BETTER GOVERNMENT SERVICE

*Service Where and When You Need It
Effective Regulation, Less Red Tape*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



Better Government Service

Customers of banks or book stores benefit from new technologies, convenient hours and customer-driven service when they shop. So should taxpayers when they use government services.

We have made significant investments in technologies to provide better, faster and more efficient service to Ontario taxpayers. We have begun to replace outdated bureaucratic processes with simple, easy-to-use technologies like Service Ontario kiosks and put many more services on-line.

Now, it's time to reorganize the way government works and to utilize all the technology that successful people and businesses are using at work and at home. To provide government services that are available where, when and how people need them on The Road Ahead, we will -

- Open key government offices to the public during evenings and weekends. Working Ontarians often don't have the time to line up for important documents like drivers' licences and birth certificates, or services such as driving tests, during normal office hours.

Real public service should respond to real public needs. Depending on local demand, these government services will be offered outside normal business hours.

- Integrate government services in smaller communities. For example, new health cards will be available at driver's licence centres, where photo equipment is already in place.

- Quadruple the number of Service Ontario kiosks over the next five years. These handy kiosks work like Automated Teller Machines do for banks, offering many standard services (driver's licence renewal, change of address, fine payments, etc.) at more convenient locations and times. We will make more of them available in smaller municipalities and in tourism offices, LCBO stores and other government-owned operations across Ontario.

You will find more services available at these handy kiosks over the next few years ... everything from being able to book your space at a Provincial Park to renewing your fishing licence and ordering government publications.

Every public government service that can be offered electronically will be, either at a kiosk or via the Internet.

- Make it easier for people and small businesses to access the services, forms and programs they need on-line. We will have one, easy to navigate e-government portal for small business, and all of our web sites and on-line services will use the same simple and user-friendly standards.

- Continue to restructure and refinance government assets for the public good.

Effective Regulation, Less Red Tape

We've made Ontario into a recognized world leader in fighting red tape. Since 1995, the Red Tape Commission has done an incredible job of identifying and eliminating ridiculous regulations and job-killing red tape (see box on page 4). In fact, officials travel from all over the world to see how Ontario reduces red tape and promotes excellence in regulation.

But effective regulation means more than cutting red tape. It means ensuring that we have the right regulations to do the job, and that we develop them with thoughtfulness, care and consultation.

It's government's job to make sure regulations actually help solve problems, not make them bigger. Poorly designed regulations can create costly bureaucracy, waste, job-killing red tape — or all three.

On The Road Ahead we will strengthen regulations that protect people while getting rid of needless regulations that kill jobs:

- We will establish the ***Ten Principles of Regulatory Excellence*** (see box on next page) in law and make all new regulations consistent with them.
- We will pay special attention to listening to and protecting Ontario's farmers and small businesses — our economic engines — from being harmed by red tape, and we will consult with all groups most directly affected by regulations.
- We will report annually to the public on our progress in preventing job killing regulation and cutting red tape.
- We will give the public a chance to consider and comment on new rules before they become law (see The Road Ahead policy paper on 'A Stronger Democracy for Ontario').

Ten Principles of Regulatory Excellence

- Regulations should be clear and understandable.
- Persons affected should be consulted in advance.
- There must be a strong and effective means of enforcing the regulation.
- Before making a regulation, government must clearly identify its objective and how the regulation will achieve it.
- The costs of a regulation (both to government and to those who are regulated) must be calculated and made public before the regulation is made.
- The benefits of a regulation must outweigh its costs.
- Before making a regulation, government must examine how other places in Canada and in the world address the same problem. Regulations must be based upon the best and most up-to-date knowledge in the world.
- A regulation's potential impact on jobs and the economy must be disclosed in advance.
- The government should report to the public on implementation.
- Regulations must be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are still effective. If they have become obsolete, we will scrap them.

CUTTING THROUGH THE RED TAPE

Since our government created the Red Tape Review Commission in 1995, it has helped us to identify and eliminate more than 2,000 unneeded, outdated or harmful regulations and rules, saving countless tax dollars and sparing Ontarians untold amounts of frustration.

Until we established the Commission, there had NEVER been a complete inventory of Ontario's laws and regulations. Some of the pieces of red tape we found and cut were almost unbelievable ...

The *Massey-Ferguson Limited Act, 1981* (the company hadn't operated or existed in Ontario for over a decade)

The *Bread Sales Act* (specified that regular loaves of bread must weigh exactly 450, 570, 675 or 900 grams and that 'small loaves' must not exceed 340 grams)

The *Hypnosis Act* (designed to govern the activities of hypnotists in travelling road shows, the provisions hadn't been used in over 40 years)

The *Oleomargarine Act* (among other things, required that the words 'oleomargarine is served here' be displayed in any restaurant using margarine, and that margarine containers not use pictures of cows)

The *Ontario Telephone Development Corporation Act* (created a corporation that could seize someone's land for telephone systems without their consent)

The *Ontario Economic Council Act* (the last of these "think tank" councils was disbanded in the 1980s)



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

A STRONGER DEMOCRACY FOR ONTARIO

*More Public Input
Parliamentary Reform
More Independence for MPPs
Opening Up the Budget*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



A Working Democracy

It's no secret that people are losing faith in many of their institutions these days, and that government is near the top of the list of institutions people would like to see changed.

We understand the frustration felt by many citizens who feel their political institutions are out of touch, ineffective, or both. We have taken many steps to strengthen democracy and public input into government in Ontario (see box on this page), but we also agree that the way government works right now is simply not good enough.

Putting Public Interest First

Since 1995, we have introduced a long list of important reforms to strengthen the voice of Ontarians and to better reflect the public will in policy decisions and everyday government operations:

- We introduced a 'sunshine' law that reveals the salaries of top bureaucrats, politicians and public officials
- We reduced the number of MPPs from 130 to 103, scrapped their gold-plated pension plan and put decisions about their salaries in the hands of an independent decision-maker

- We brought in a law that allows municipalities to hold referendums on important issues for their residents

- We introduced tough new rules on conflict of interest and on expense claims for Ontario politicians

- We created a lobbyist registration system that allows anyone to see which companies, organizations and individuals are trying to influence public policy

- Every Ministry must now prepare an annual business plan showing how it will use taxpayers' money efficiently and effectively in the year ahead

Now, we will further strengthen democracy and help restore people's faith that their provincial politicians are truly listening, representing them, and acting effectively on their behalf.

Making the changes we propose will each require a majority vote in the Legislature, and these kinds of reforms are often made in consultation among all parties, a process that we support.

Democratic reform is NOT just about altering some technical rules, it is about the fundamental rights of all Ontarians. That is why we are outlining our plan here, before the election, so that people can see and evaluate our proposals.

Our plan to give more power and influence directly to the public, and to make government and politicians more accountable and responsive on The Road Ahead includes the following commitments:

- Giving the public input on significant new regulations BEFORE they become law
- Giving people the right to file petitions directly to the Ontario Legislature
- Requiring the Provincial Cabinet to meet quarterly with members of the public in different regions of Ontario
- Give more powers to individual MPPs to represent their constituents, including more free votes in the Legislature and more time for Private Members' bills
- Reforming the budget process to require public consultation before a provincial budget can be tabled

More Direct Democracy

Our democratic institutions don't belong to politicians, they belong to the people of Ontario. On The Road Ahead, we will take democracy directly to the people, allowing them to share some of the power traditionally reserved for politicians –

- We will give the public a chance to consider and comment on significant new regulations before they become law. All proposed major regulations will be made public and Ontarians will have 30 days to provide their comments.

The only exceptions would be for urgent regulations affecting health, safety, law enforcement and the

environment. These would be put into effect temporarily, then posted for comment. After seeing the public input, government would then either put those regulations in place permanently, or scrap them altogether.

With regulations subject to this open, transparent and democratic process, government's decisions will better reflect the will of the people.

- We will allow members of the public to file petitions directly to the Ontario Legislature by using the Internet. Right now, petitions must be circulated manually for each signature. Modern technology allows people to set up 'virtual petitions' on the Internet for people to sign electronically. Organizers of a petition will be able to send the results of their efforts straight to a willing MPP or to the Speaker of the House to have them presented in the Legislature. The government will have to provide a public response to each petition within 24 sitting days of the Legislature.

- We will put provincial politicians back in touch with all regions of our province by requiring them to meet at times outside of Queen's Park. The Provincial Cabinet will travel and hold at least one 'town hall' meeting quarterly in a different region of the province. Community leaders, interest groups and ordinary citizens would be able to attend these meetings and make presentations directly to the Premier and Cabinet ministers.

This is in addition to our commitment that the Ontario Cabinet will meet at least once per year directly with the leadership of Ontario's cities, towns and regions, led by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, which is made up of the duly elected representatives of Ontario's municipalities.

- We will preserve the people's right to directly elect their representatives. Dalton McGuinty's Liberals are toying with—and the NDP supports—a system called "proportional representation," in which you would vote for a political party, not for your local MPP. We completely reject this idea, because MPPs elected in this manner would be accountable only to their party's leadership, not to any constituents. This would weaken the role of individual MPPs and remove your access to a directly elected representative.

We believe that real democracy means being able to elect a specific representative for your community . . . someone to call when you have a problem or a suggestion, and someone directly accountable to you and your neighbours.

Making Parliament Work Better

People watching debates or committee meetings in the Legislature should be seeing their representatives working for the public interest and representing their constituents, not scoring political points off one another or simply voting the party line.

In order to restore the REAL role of the Legislature as a place to do the people's business on The Road Ahead, we will –

- Make legislative committees more effective and meaningful. These committees are supposed to act on behalf of the entire Legislature, looking into specific issues or proposed laws and recommending the best responses. Too often, they turn into partisan battlegrounds, where everyone can predict the results of the final votes before the committee hearings even start. The system doesn't serve Ontarians well, and we will change it.

- We will use more 'ad hoc' committees created

to handle specific legislation or policies. Committee members will be those with genuine interest or expertise in the subject matter. These new, issue-specific committees will produce better results and better hold the government accountable.

- We will allow MPPs to elect the chairs and vice-chairs of committees by secret ballot. After all, this is a democracy.

- To cement their independence and give them the tools to hold government accountable, the committee chairs will receive modest budgets for independent research.

- Bring in a series of measures to enhance and strengthen the role of the individual MPP. MPPs are elected to represent their constituents at Queen's Park, not the other way around. They should have more freedom and power to reflect the needs and feelings of the people who elected them.

- We will allow more free votes by MPPs. Votes related to money or fundamental policy will remain issues of confidence but, in all other cases, members will be able to vote as they see fit, even against the official position of their own parties.

- We will improve the scrutiny of government spending by Members, so that they can hold government ministries accountable for results.

- The legislative rules will be changed to allow MPPs to co-sponsor bills. Not only will this encourage non-partisan cooperation on initiatives and enhance the credibility of legislation, it also allows members to better represent the views of their constituents by attaching their endorsement to good legislation.

- We will double the time devoted to private members' bills, and make it easier for such bills to become law. A bill supported by at least 75 per cent of all MPPs will be fast-tracked and put to a vote at all stages necessary to become law.
- Reform the budget process to provide greater public input and understanding of what government plans to do with public money. The provincial budget is the government's most important annual pronouncement of public policy. Budget proposals must be approved by the Legislature in order to become law, but members of the public, who are most directly affected by what is in a budget, should have their say. Our plan will bring the budget closer to the people.
- Believe it or not, there is no requirement that the budget be presented before the start of the new fiscal year each April 1st. This has led in the past to the absurd situation of a government announcing its spending plans when the fiscal year was already underway! We will require that provincial budgets be presented before April 1st of each year.

We will require that government consult with the public before tabling a provincial budget. Real, democratic consultation will allow government to explore options, discuss the potential impact of proposals and get helpful input from members of the public and knowledgeable stakeholders.

Obviously, some budget proposals will still have to be kept confidential to stop people from taking advantage of advance knowledge. Budgetary proposals that do NOT need to be kept confidential should be on the table for open discussion and public debate during pre-budget consultations. Government should be free to talk about its ideas and make sure they reflect the needs and concerns of the people of Ontario.



THE ROAD AHEAD

THE ROAD AHEAD

Policy Paper

A WORKERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

*A Stronger Voice for Workers
Access to Union Information*

Property of the Library
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY
GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



More Rights for Working Ontarians

Having power means taking responsibility. We believe that institutions that have the power to control your money or make decisions on your behalf must prove they are acting responsibly, and must be accountable to the people involved. If it is your money or your life being affected, you are entitled to full disclosure of what is happening and to a say in how your money is spent.

We've imposed that principle on our own government and public services, with tough consumer protection rules for businesses, and through high standards for openness and responsibility for corporate officials. Now, in the same spirit, we will pass a ***Workers' Bill of Rights***.

This groundbreaking new law will protect working Ontarians by ensuring that their unions operate on principles of democracy, transparency and accountability. It will give workers the right to know where their union dues go, to have a say in how their dues are spent, and to obtain access to union information.

Our Workers' Bill of Rights will include the following protections for working Ontarians on The Road Ahead:

- Guaranteeing members a say in how their union spends their money. We will require a binding vote of the members on all expenditures outside of normal operational costs. For example, one union sponsors a NASCAR racing car. Other unions

reimburse union officials when they are fined for breaking the law. In each case, the Bill of Rights would allow union members to approve or reject the expenditure.

Some unions shelter their spending decisions by giving money to a union council or other group that, in turn, gives the money to a cause unrelated to collective bargaining. We will ensure that all uses of workers' money are subject to a vote of union members.

Other unions hold votes at times and places when very few members can attend. To protect against this, we will require that an actual majority of the workers approve each expenditure.

- Requiring real membership approval of major union decisions. The Bill of Rights will require a clear majority of the bargaining unit to approve strikes, ratify contracts or change union dues or fees.
- Allowing union members to sue their unions for negligence, breaches of contract and torts. Currently, unions have special status above the law that makes it impossible to bring civil actions against them, even in cases of fraud, conspiracy or negligence, when a corporation or individual could be sued for doing the exact same thing.

- Guaranteeing that all union members have access to their union's constitution, collective agreement, records of expenditures and financial statements. This applies both to their union local and to any national or international union to which the local belongs. The information will include;

- full disclosure of all gifts, monetary or otherwise, received by union officials,
- full disclosure of trusts, stabilization or other funds established by the union,
- information about loans made by the union and
- details of union officials' total compensation, including holdings, benefits and spousal entitlements.

We will require this information to be filed with the Ontario Labour Relations Board so that it is available to any member upon request.

- We have already introduced 'sunshine laws' that require government, public institutions and unions to reveal the salaries of their top managers and anyone on their staff making more than \$100,000 a year. Almost everyone is complying with this public disclosure law, but some unions are still refusing to become accountable to their members. We will ensure that unions and union officials who defy this law will be prosecuted, and face heavy fines if convicted.

- Like the shareholders of any company, or taxpayers of any province, the members of a union should also have the right to see an annual, audited report of the financial activities of their union. We will require all union locals, their national or international parents and umbrella groups to complete a formal annual report, showing all revenues and expenditures, and the status and performance of union pension plans (even if they are foreign-based). These reports will be filed with the Ontario Labour Relations Board and unions will be required to make them freely and easily available to all their members.

- Many workers belong to union locals that are tied to an international (usually U.S.-based) union. In some cases, 50% or more of their monthly dues are sent to Washington. These Ontario locals are permanently locked into a relationship with their U.S. parents, even if their members decide that it no longer meets their needs.

We will give Ontario workers the freedom to decide their own futures. Concerns about an international union can be taken to the independent Ontario Labour Relations Board. If the OLRB upholds the complaint, then the Ontario workers will have the freedom to vote on ending the relationship. A majority vote by the local's members would be required to end or change affiliation with an international union.