

# MILLION JOBS PLAN

ONTARIO  PC

Ontario. Working. Better.



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## ***A LETTER TO ONTARIO FROM TIM HUDAK***

Here's what I believe: Government is not just about politics and policies; it's about people and their potential.

Every young person who can't find a job that uses her skills is a story of promise unfulfilled. Every veteran worker who is laid off means a family will have to struggle just to get by. The loss of human potential and the loss of the dignity of work can't be measured simply by numbers.

Ontarians want good jobs, a chance to earn higher pay, public services of which we can all be proud, safe communities to live and work in and a future in which our children are better off than we are today.

Ontarians want a government that will help them reach those goals, one that will take our province in a bold, confident, new direction. We need to get off the failed path of high unemployment, unsustainably large government and record levels of debt. The interest payments on that debt are holding back our economy and taking away money we need for the things we value most like health care and classroom education.

That is not the future I see for Ontario.

I see an Ontario that creates good jobs and great opportunities, where everyone has a fair chance at success.

I see a bold, entrepreneurial Ontario where employers are no longer held back by high taxes, rising electricity rates and excessive regulation.

I see a school system that helps our children reach their full potential, sets higher standards and leaves no one behind.

I see a health care system that gets everyone working together to meet your needs. I see a system that does a better job for seniors, so they can choose to stay in their own homes and live full lives.

I see a focused government that knows what its role is, and does it well.

These are achievable goals, but to achieve them requires urgent action.

My team and I have consulted with thousands of people, and they tell me these goals are their goals, too. They also understand that time is not on our side.

Our platform, Million Jobs Plan, is a comprehensive plan to address Ontario's most urgent need: more and better jobs.

That is Ontario's priority and that is my priority, because growth in the private sector provides new tax dollars to help pay for government services.

I know we can build a previously unimagined Ontario, but it's going to take some courage and a willingness to challenge the failed status quo. That's what our Ontario PC Party platform Million Jobs Plan delivers.

I can remember when Ontario had the best schools, the best health care, and the best economy in the country. This was where people came to find their futures. Working together, we can do it again. It's time to get Ontario moving.

– Tim Hudak, Leader, Ontario PC Party









# ***WHERE WE ARE NOW***

To solve Ontario's problems, we must begin by analyzing the scale of Ontario's jobs and debt crisis. Ontario didn't become a province known for high unemployment, reckless overspending and ballooning debt overnight, nor did it achieve that status by accident. We can't explain it all away by talking about the recession - that ended five years ago - or the troubles of the world economy.

Ontario was put in this situation largely due to a series of deliberate decisions by the current government, decisions that have cost our economy and Ontario families dearly. Here are some of the key figures:



# 300,000

*The number of manufacturing jobs lost since 2003. Amazingly, it is also the number of new government positions added during the McGuinty-Wynne years.*

# 150,000

*The net number of people who left Ontario and moved to Western Canada since 2003.*

# 7

*The number of consecutive years Ontario's jobless rate has been higher than the national average. Also the number of consecutive years Ontario's government has spent more than it collected in revenue.*

# 800,000

*The number of men and women in Ontario today without a job.*

# \$46 billion

*The total cost of Ontario's subsidies for wind and solar power, money that could have been spent to build all of the new subways and other public transit in Toronto and the GTA to break gridlock.*

# \$289 billion

*The total amount of debt accumulated by the Government of Ontario, double the level when the McGuinty-Wynne government was first elected.*

# \$1 billion

*The amount of new debt the Ontario government adds every month.*

# 80

*The average travel time in minutes, to and from work, in the GTA – the longest commute in North America.*

# 0

*The number of Premiers, excluding Dalton McGuinty and Kathleen Wynne, who were in power when Ontario collected equalization payments as a 'have-not' province.*

A young person with short brown hair, wearing safety glasses and a dark blue long-sleeved shirt, is focused on working with a lathe machine. The machine is a complex piece of industrial equipment with various metal components and a rotating workpiece. The background is a blurred workshop environment. The entire image has a blue tint.

# A Better Economy

When it comes to jobs, big achievements start with bold goals. That's why we are proposing a plan that will help create one million jobs over the next eight years. It's an ambitious target, but Ontario has done it before in the late 90s. We believe that Ontarians' drive, hard work and skills will enable us to meet this goal again.



# A JOBS POWERHOUSE

Ontario has a fundamental need for more jobs with higher pay. We all need opportunities for ourselves and for our children, so our families can afford homes, so we can send our kids to college or university and so we can have the security that employment brings.

Steady, stable jobs also create the taxes government needs to provide the hospitals, schools, highways and subways we all rely on.

Ontario can be a jobs powerhouse again because we have a lot of natural economic advantages. Our workforce is skilled and highly educated. We have significant natural resources and direct proximity to the enormous U.S. market. We are leaders in financial, and some health, energy and educational services – the types of expertise the rest of the world is crying out for. Our province is full of creative people and risk-takers who will help lead the way as we expand our economic horizons and compete with the world. Much of the world economy is driven by manufacturing, resource development and agriculture. These are among our historic, and we believe, our future strengths.

What's truly exciting about our plan is that it's not the same old, tired collection of subsidies, handouts and new government agencies and expert panels.

We don't believe that government can create or "save" jobs, but there are important things it can do to encourage those who can. Our first step will be to balance the government's books. People simply won't invest in a province that hasn't got its own act together, and right now, Ontario does not.

## **ACTION – REPLACE CORPORATE WELFARE WITH LOWER TAXES**

Stimulate job creation by replacing corporate welfare programs that benefit only a few firms with a business tax reduction that treats all businesses equally. We will reduce Ontario's business taxes by 30% – making them the lowest in North America. We can

afford to lower taxes for all employers by ending the confusing array of government handouts that favour well-connected businesses and cost taxpayers up to \$2 billion a year. These programs don't create sustainable jobs. Our future growth relies on entrepreneurs who take risks, not corporations that rely on government support.

## **ACTION – INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES IN SKILLED TRADES**

Do away with cumbersome and outdated apprenticeship rules that limit the number of job opportunities in the trades. We will make it easier for people to get jobs as electricians, plumbers or precision machine operators by making trades training a community college course like any other. We will abolish the College of Trades, a new bureaucracy that creates red tape and new taxes that actually stop many young people from joining the trades. By removing these barriers, our plan will connect workers with 200,000 opportunities in the skilled trades, jobs our young people and our economy desperately need.

## **ACTION – MAKE ENERGY AFFORDABLE**

Stop expensive and counterproductive power subsidies, pare down costly and unnecessary bureaucracy, invest in affordable and clean nuclear and hydroelectric energy, import hydro from Quebec and other jurisdictions as required and take advantage of cheap and abundant natural gas. Nothing has been more damaging to household budgets and to our economy than Ontario's soaring electricity prices. Heavily subsidized wind and solar power contribute to already-high prices that are forecast to increase by 42 per cent over the next five years. Ontario already has the highest energy prices for industry in North America, and higher prices will drive businesses out of Ontario. Our plan will get electricity prices under control and reclaim one of Ontario's traditional economic strengths – affordable energy.

# Eliminating the red tape

Every politician says they're against red tape but most of them never back it up. Our economy cannot afford inaction. We will focus our red tape cutting on specific industries: agriculture, construction, cultural industries and manufacturing. And we will start reducing the regulatory burden with these specific measures:

1. Eliminate rules that prohibit competitive bids on government construction projects
2. Eliminate the College of Trades, which is nothing but a new bureaucracy to tax tradespeople and limit job creation
3. Streamline apprenticeship rules to create jobs in the trades
4. End the government monopoly in providing workplace insurance to employers
5. Repeal the Far North Act to encourage job creation in the North and development of the Ring of Fire
6. Make it simple and quick to get the permits to produce a music or theatre festival so that artists are performing and not filling in forms
7. Eliminate the excessive bureaucracy, unreasonable rules and lavish subsidies that have driven up hydro bills
8. Focus the mandate of conservation authorities to balance the needs of our economy and our environment
9. Eliminate hundreds of unnecessary rules that bog down the social assistance system, so that it is easy to understand and focuses on helping people find work
10. Reduce government's operational role in lotteries and gambling – while ensuring a strong regulatory one – because government should be focused on running schools and hospitals, not casinos and lottery booths

## ***ACTION – SAVE SMALL BUSINESSES TIME AND MONEY***

Eliminate rules and regulations that don't benefit consumers, workers or employers, reducing the total by one-third over three years. Government regulation should focus on a few important priorities like the environment, public safety and consumer protection. Government shouldn't meddle in every aspect of our lives and our businesses. Ontario companies spend \$11 billion a year complying with government regulations. Employers continually tell us this burden is impeding Ontario's progress, particularly for small businesses, the ones that don't have HR and legal departments and can't afford experts to help them figure out how it all works. We want our entrepreneurs to spend time and effort on job creation and productivity, not government paperwork.

## ***ACTION – COMPETE FOR SKILLED IMMIGRANTS***

Concentrate on proven initiatives that match job-ready new Canadians with skills-hungry Ontario employers. People who are new to Ontario should enjoy every opportunity to study, work and prosper. Currently there are shortages of qualified workers in some professions, and employers cannot find local residents to fill these positions. Other provinces are successfully taking advantage of federal programs to strengthen their economies, attract entrepreneurs and fill gaps. Ontario should be the destination of choice for the world's best and brightest by convincing those who have completed their post-secondary education in Canada, or who have worked full-time for over a year, to settle in Ontario on an accelerated pathway to citizenship. More immigrants will invest their future here when they see Ontario has again become the province of opportunity.

## ***ACTION – REDUCE THE TAX BURDEN ON ONTARIO FAMILIES***

Leave a little bit more money in the family budget at the end of each month by lowering the income tax burden. The taxes families pay are too high and those high taxes hurt our economy because they penalize effort. Our middle-class taxpayers are subject to tax rates that rise dramatically as they earn more, taking away money they need to support their families. Once we have balanced the budget, one of our top priorities will be to reduce income taxes to continue boosting the economy and reward the shared sacrifice we are asking all Ontarians to make as we balance the budget.

## ***ACTION – GENERATE PUBLIC DOLLARS FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD***

Allow Ontario and Canadian pension plans to invest in government-owned businesses like the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation to raise the billions of dollars we need to improve and expand Ontario's subways and highways. The pension plans of our teachers, municipal, energy and health care workers, for example, invest in businesses like these all over the world on behalf of their members. We think they should invest in Ontario, too. The government should also sell off its extra land and unused buildings and move some government departments and agencies out of downtown Toronto so that job creators can put these properties to more productive use. We will use the money we raise to solve urban and rural Ontario's pressing transportation needs through an Ontario Transportation Trust that will clearly show what money comes in, and where it goes. Only government will pay for the infrastructure our economy needs to succeed. We will do that without raising taxes.

## ***ACTION – GET GTA TRAFFIC MOVING AGAIN***

Fix the GTA's chronic transit and transportation problems. GTA traffic is clogging the arteries of Canada's economic heart, degrading the environment and harming families' quality of life. Most people agree that we need better transit and more roads. The problem is a lack of leadership and a perceived lack of money. Here's how we are going to fix it. We will put the province in charge of all rail-based transit and major highways in the GTA and we will better connect Toronto and the "905 region". Commuters will have, for the first time, a system where all the pieces fit together. We will do it without raising taxes,

by making transit the top priority in the province's existing annual \$12-billion capital budget. We will provide additional capital dollars by investing the surpluses that come from our aggressive plan to balance the budget, demanding better value and better service from current operators and their unions, having the private sector play a greater role to deliver value, and using money in our proposed Ontario Transportation Trust. These actions will enable us to dedicate up to \$2 billion per year after we balance the budget. That money will pay for a balanced set of priorities: we will build subways and our first priority will be the East-West Express Subway that connects the people who live in Etobicoke and the eastern parts of the city directly to downtown Toronto. We will expand our highways by fixing bottlenecks throughout the region. And we will expand GO Transit with more rush hour service, more express trains, more all-day, two-way service and a more superior customer experience. The commuting problem in the GTA is generations in the making. That's why we need action and leadership to get the GTA moving again without increasing your taxes.

#### **ACTION – CREATE JOBS AND GROWTH IN NORTHERN AND RURAL ONTARIO**

Deliver on our comprehensive plan to create jobs in the rural and northern communities that have struggled the most under the current government. Too often, people who simply don't understand the realities of our vast province make decisions at Queen's Park. A job in the North or in our rural areas is just as important as a job in our cities. Our plan to eliminate unneeded government regulations, improve access to skilled trades and distribute gas tax revenue more fairly so that every community gets a share will boost northern and rural economies. We will control energy costs, in part by restoring local control over expensive wind and solar energy projects. Our plans to expand agriculture, tourism, mining and forestry will help the provincial economy and create jobs across the province. Ontario needs real growth in these vital sectors to get our province out of its jobs crisis.

#### **ACTION – HELP PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SUCCEED**

Move quickly to connect employers to people with disabilities to develop more opportunities and to reduce barriers that exist in the workplace. Expand post-secondary education for people with disabilities, so they can develop job-ready skills. When it comes to people with disabilities, we have a moral and an economic responsibility to focus on their abilities and not just on what holds them back. Our family members, friends and neighbours who have a disability of some kind are a wellspring of talent and determination. We must seize this opportunity – for them and for our economy. Our plan is founded on the belief that every Ontarian has the right to lead his or her life to its fullest potential.

#### **ACTION – RE-BALANCE LABOUR LAWS**

Change Ontario's labour laws to give individual union members more control and a bigger say. We will give all individuals the right to a secret ballot in certification votes. We will introduce paycheque protection so that workers are not forced to pay fees towards political causes they don't support. Union leaders

will be required to be transparent and open with their financial information, just as companies and charities are. This will enable union members to know exactly how their dues are being spent. This reasonable and balanced approach will make union leaders more accountable to their membership and make Ontario a more attractive and productive place to do business.

#### **ACTION – GIVE OUR COLLEGES A BIGGER ROLE**

Expand the role of community colleges. They offer an excellent education that prepares students for real-life jobs. In Ontario, there is a disconnect between the skills of workers and the needs of the economy. That's why we have good jobs unfilled and good people unable to find work. We will encourage more students to attend our high-results colleges, and make that easier by offering more college courses that also count as high school credits. We will also make it simpler for students to transfer from college to university, and vice versa, while getting credit for the work they have already done. We believe the way to solve that problem for the future is with an education system that makes the next generation job ready. Our community colleges are focused directly on that goal.

#### **ACTION – STRENGTHEN THE LINK BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND JOBS**

Deliver the best academic preparation for the next generation of workers, leaders and innovators who will create and fill jobs in a growing Ontario economy. That will require a renewed emphasis on the quality and quantity of university teaching, and on the importance of critical thinking. It also means a strong focus on science, technology, engineering, business and math. Evidence shows that top students are attracted to studies in these subjects, and they are the same disciplines that drive economic growth. We will work with our universities to provide more spaces for students in these vital areas of study – to help build a culture of entrepreneurship in Ontario. We will also make sure that no Ontario student is denied access because of a lack of money. We want our universities to offer access, produce excellence and create job-ready students.

#### **ACTION – EXPAND FREE TRADE**

Pursue free trade deals with other provinces, knocking down the archaic barriers that prevent Ontarians from doing business in their own country. Lack of free trade between provinces is costing Canada an estimated \$50 billion a year in economic activity, taking away jobs and tax revenue we need. We will also aggressively pursue, with the federal government, new international trade deals, so that Ontario companies are first in line for new business. We need to sell our raw materials, our manufactured goods, our services and our ideas to the world. Ontario's economic future depends on free trade.





# ***A GOVERNMENT WE CAN AFFORD***

Eliminating Ontario's \$12-billion a year deficit requires a two-step approach. The current government has let the deficit get so large that it can't be eliminated by economic growth alone or by spending reductions alone. We need both. The important thing to know is that spending reductions are not an end in themselves, but a critical first step that helps create the job expansion required to wipe out the deficit.

Businesses are only willing to invest and create jobs when they see a stable government with a sustainable budget. They know Ontario's massive annual deficits will eventually lead to further tax increases that hurt their competitiveness. They know the deficits threaten the province's ability to build the roads and transit our economy needs to succeed.

The experience of the last decade has shown that you can't build a healthy and expanding economy by borrowing money to enlarge the public sector. We have a responsibility to each other and to future generations to live within our means and to build an Ontario that will be a jobs powerhouse. To do that, we must get ourselves out of this debt crisis we are in right now.

That's why an Ontario PC government will balance the budget within two years of the election. Difficult decisions must be made, but delay doesn't make those decisions any easier.

This is a central pillar of our jobs plan. We know it won't be easy, but if we work together, we can do it.

The details of how we will balance the budget are laid out in detail in a separate document.



Let's be clear. Balancing the budget means that government will actually have to spend less than it does today. Anyone who tells you otherwise is either naive, or thinks you are.

We think government shouldn't grow faster than the economy does. When that happens, we end up in a jobs and debt crisis like the one we're in now. That's why we will pass a law, The Spending Within Our Means Act, which will prevent government from growing beyond a fixed percentage of the economy. (Under the current government spending has grown 50% faster than the economy!) When the economy grows – and under our plan it will – the resources available for government grow too. This kind of mandated prudence will keep our budget balanced over the long haul. And that will provide a strong foundation for sustained economic growth and job creation.

Balancing the books doesn't mean giving up the things that define our quality of life: good jobs and more opportunities, faster commutes, better health care, classroom education and services for our most vulnerable citizens. Balancing the books is the only way to safeguard them. It means a government that will be better – but also one that will be smaller and more efficient. Government must focus on its core functions, and do them well.

#### **ACTION – REDUCE GOVERNMENT SPENDING**

Review every government program, keeping those that work, fixing those that require it and cancelling the ones that don't give taxpayers good value. This is the key step to a smaller, more focused government, one that we can afford. Over the course of our two-year balanced budget plan, total spending on government programs will go down. Because health care is

the most important service government provides, health care spending will continue to grow predictably so that you receive excellent care where and when you need it.

#### **ACTION – SHRINK THE CABINET**

Reduce the number of ministries, and the number of cabinet positions at the swearing in of a PC government, from 27 to 16. In a legislature of 107 MPPs, we don't need 27 people responsible for spending decisions. In addition, we will tie ministers' salaries to specific performance goals, like reducing the regulatory burden on job creators and meeting budget targets. A smaller, more effective government starts at the top.

#### **ACTION – STOP THE RUNAWAY GROWTH OF GOVERNMENT WAGES**

Implement a two-year pay freeze, by legislation if necessary, that will apply to all public servants, including MPPs, senior civil servants and the more than 4,000 collective bargaining agreements across the entire public sector payroll as part of our comprehensive plan to control government spending. Since more than half of every tax dollar goes towards public sector wages and benefits, total public sector compensation needs to go down over this two-year period. Everyone in the public service has to contribute to the solution. It's the only fair way that doesn't single out specific groups of workers. This part of our plan will save \$2 billion over two years to give our government time to make the fundamental changes a sustainable budget requires. While a pay freeze is necessary, it's not sufficient to help us balance the budget and re-focus our government. We will also require those who settle contract disputes involving government workers to compare public sector jobs to similar ones in the private sector and base their decisions about pay on what local taxpayers can afford. The



public shouldn't have to pay a premium for every government job, though the arbitration rules we have now pretty much guarantee it. Controlling government overspending requires these kinds of difficult decisions that recognize that there is only one taxpayer and one public service.

#### ***ACTION – BRING BALANCE BACK TO GOVERNMENT BENEFITS***

Bring government benefits in line with those of the private sector while ensuring that the pensions already earned by government workers will be protected. Pensions are a good thing, but government pensions have become increasingly unsustainable for Ontario taxpayers. Six out of ten Ontarians have no workplace pension at all – a figure that rises to eight out of ten for small business employees. On the other hand, most government workers have expensive pensions and benefits that leave taxpayers on the hook for any shortfalls. New government workers will still get pensions, but not the type that guarantees defined and expensive future payments. We will offer the type of coverage that most of those who have pensions in the private sector receive. This will reduce one of the biggest financial risks the government faces.

#### ***ACTION – REDUCE THE SIZE OF GOVERNMENT PAYROLL***

Decrease the number of positions on the government payroll by 100,000, about 10 per cent. That's the size the government was as recently as 2009. Vital frontline services such as those performed by nurses, doctors and police will not be affected. The reduction of government positions will be done by redefining the scope of government to focus on the things it can do best. As government gets out of businesses in which it does not belong, many of these jobs will be transferred to Ontario companies. When employees retire, many of these positions will not be filled. A new focus on frontline service will mean fewer administrative jobs. Government's payroll will also shrink as it eliminates agencies and programs that don't offer good value for the taxpayer. Combined, these actions will reduce the size of the public sector from slightly more than 1,000,000 Ontarians to a size we can all afford.

#### ***ACTION – ENCOURAGE BETTER SERVICE THROUGH COMPETITION***

Get the best price for services government provides you. For as many government services as possible, we will open contracts to competition, to get the best deal for taxpayers. If you can find the service in the phone book, why should government automatically pay for a unionized government worker to do it? Things like building maintenance, IT support and food service should be open to competition. This will mean better service, better value, more innovative ways to deliver service and a more dynamic government.

#### ***ACTION – CREATE A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY CIVIL SERVICE***

Refocus government on jobs that only government can and should do. This will mean a smaller, more vibrant civil service, one that sets clear goals, measures outcomes and rewards excellence and high performance. We want the best and brightest Ontarians to help us rebuild our province. Right now, only current government employees are allowed to apply for many government jobs. This system is unfair and ineffective. That's why we will make as many new or vacant government jobs as possible open to competition, so that every Ontarian has a fair chance at them.

Better health care  
and education

# ***A BETTER APPROACH TO HEALTH CARE***

Health care is the provincial government's most important responsibility. Our plan for a strong economy and a government that lives within its means will give us the ability to deliver better health care.

Our health and the health of our families depend on reliable access to top quality care. Ontario is blessed with dedicated nurses, doctors and other caregivers, all of whom work hard to do their best for patients. Yet we all know that their commitment alone is not enough; health care is not always timely or easy to use, and it faces enormous pressure in the future.

In the decades leading up to the last recession, the health care bill in Ontario rose steadily between six and eight per cent a year. That's just not sustainable. Economists, health care experts and political parties agree on that. Despite all of the spending, and the efforts of our outstanding front-line health workers, we do not consistently get the results Ontario families expect and deserve. Far too many seniors wait for the home care or the long-term care they need. People with chronic diseases like diabetes and kidney disease get a tremendous amount of health care treatment, but their health results are often poor.

While we often use the term "health care system," it isn't one, really. Instead, it is a confusing series of organizations and individuals, each typically focused on only one aspect of a person's care. Worse, key decisions are too often made at the Ministry of Health or in the so-called Local Health Integration Networks, by bureaucrats who are not nurses and doctors, and who never see a patient. We will put local health care decision making in the hands of the front-line professionals who care for you in your community. We think your nurses, doctors, community care organizations and hospitals know best what care you need.

To get them all working together, we will remove layers of unnecessary bureaucracy, and instead give the responsibility for co-ordinating care to organizations that actually deliver health care. We call these Health Hubs. They will bring front-line local experts from every aspect of health care together at the same table to decide what's best in your community, and to work together on actually delivering it. The focus will not be on the needs of institutions, but on the needs of the patient.

All of our proposals are focused on one goal: helping you and your family to be as healthy as possible. Some of the choices required to get there are difficult, while others may seem so obvious it's hard to imagine why they haven't happened already. With the courage to make those choices, and with the support of the dedicated professionals who make our health their life's work, we have complete confidence that our best, and healthiest, days are ahead.





#### ***ACTION – PUT A NEW FOCUS ON CHRONIC CARE***

Build a health care system that treats chronic diseases, ones that patients have to live with over long periods of time, as the leading health challenge of our time, not as an afterthought in a system designed around short term stays in the hospital. To help manage chronic conditions – like diabetes, heart disease or Alzheimer's – we will create chronic care centres of excellence and we will increase home-based care. We will ensure that all of the doctors and nurses caring for people with serious chronic conditions work together to develop comprehensive care plans for those patients. For patients with the highest needs we will assign them a dedicated care navigator to ensure they get the care they need when they need it, and that all of their sources of care work together. This person will be a frontline caregiver such as a nurse, not a bureaucrat. Both compassion and common sense say we must do more for people with chronic health problems.

#### ***ACTION – MOVE HEALTH CLOSER TO HOME***

Deliver care closer to home by expanding home care and long-term care availability, and by promoting more types of care in the home. Update the scope of practice for pharmacists, nurse practitioners and other professionals, to allow treatment where it is most convenient and beneficial for patients, particularly seniors. Home care that is more easily available and straightforward to receive will mean that people aren't forced into long-term care before they need it or into a hospital unnecessarily, and that a bed will be there for people who require it. We want seniors to be as healthy as they can be and to stay in their homes for as long as they can.

#### ***ACTION – ENCOURAGE CHOICE AND COMPETITION***

Give patients more choice in the health services they receive under their OHIP coverage. Allow patients receiving home care services like housekeeping and personal support to choose whether to have the government purchase home care for them (which happens today), or whether to use the same money to hire the home care of their choice. Encourage competitive contracts for services like hospital cafeterias and MRIs. We will expand the role of modern, specialty clinics to provide more services such as dialysis and routine surgeries. These modern clinics will exist because they provide better care and better value. Increasing choice and competition will make the health care system more effective and easier to use, by giving patients more control over the care they receive.

#### ***ACTION – USE EVIDENCE TO IMPROVE RESULTS AND VALUE***

Focus health care decisions on evidence, to improve the quality of care we receive and the value we get from the tax dollars that pay for it. Because our health care system is so large, we have a lot of information about which treatments work and which ones don't. But we don't use this information very well. We will dramatically enhance patient databases, with full privacy protection, to enable doctors and researchers to identify and improve the treatments that lead to the best health outcomes at the best cost. By giving doctors and nurses real-world feedback on what treatments are working best, countries like Sweden have achieved dramatic improvements in results like the rate of complications after cataract surgery. We have the knowledge to do better. Let's use it.



#### ***ACTION – MAKE MENTAL HEALTH CARE A PRIORITY***

Stop treating mental health as an afterthought in the system. Mental health care is a fundamental part of health care. It cannot be treated exclusively as a social service, as if a disorder in the brain is a less legitimate health problem than one in any other part of the body. Good mental health is just as important as good physical health. Mental health issues affect people in every part of society, with huge economic and social costs, and devastating impacts on families. Homelessness in our cities is a symptom of the system's inability to help the people who need it most. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among people 15-25 years of age. Our families and young people are crying out for help, but not nearly enough is being done. We will take the fragmented services now offered and replace them with a comprehensive approach to help some of our most vulnerable citizens.

#### ***ACTION – KEEP OUR CHILDREN ACTIVE***

Ensure that our children get 45 minutes of physical activity every weekday, through school-based activities and after-school sports. We will work with school boards to meet this essential target. Active kids live happier and healthier lives, and they learn better too. We recognize that good health is about more than just health care. By improving prevention and wellness, we can ultimately reduce the unnecessary use of health care resources and build a healthier Ontario.



A blurred background image of children in a classroom setting. A girl with a braid is visible on the right side, and other children are in the background. The image has a blue tint.

# ***PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR THE FUTURE***

We all want a great education for our kids. We send them to school every day so they can learn and grow. Our plan focuses on concrete steps that improve student achievement, especially in the areas where we have been falling behind, like math. Simply put: our schools exist to give our children the best possible education and the best shot at a successful life. That principle underlies everything we will do in education.

## ***ACTION – RAISE THE BAR FOR OUR STUDENTS***

Raise the expectations and standards in our schools. Our kids will benefit from a system that challenges them and gives them the help they need to succeed. The current test score standards for competence in reading, writing and math assume that one-quarter of our children won't master these basic skills. Our kids deserve better. We will raise the targets for reading, writing and math, make Grade 8 science subject to a province-wide standardized test and introduce a strong financial literacy curriculum. Higher standards mean our schools are preparing more students to lead full lives and get good jobs and it means leaving no student behind.

## ***ACTION – IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN MATH***


Give every student a top quality math education, turning around the decline in our students' math scores over the last ten years. This is our kids' most pressing challenge at school these days.

We will upgrade the curriculum to ensure that students are taught proven math techniques, like memorizing multiplication tables, ending the failed curriculum fad of waiting for students to "discover" multiplication and division on their own. In grades 4-6, we will increase the use of specialized math teachers. We do not assume that every teacher has the right background to teach French or music – math education deserves equal care. And we will attract more university graduates with math and science backgrounds into teaching, including at the elementary level, providing special financial incentives if these are required. Our plan will restore Ontario's reputation as one of the top jurisdictions in the world in math and science education, to attract good, high-paying jobs.

## ***ACTION – PROTECT CORE EDUCATION***

Protect the core services that our children rely on by reducing some non-core areas of spending. Years of aggressive program expansion have left our schools struggling to meet their basic functions. In Ontario, we spend \$8.5 billion more on education than we did ten years ago, to teach 250,000 fewer students. Despite all the spending our schools have only middling results. We can do better. In education, like all areas of government, choices have to be made about what approaches offer the best results. The Drummond Commission concluded that some current education spending wasn't producing value for students.



A close-up photograph of a young girl with light brown hair in two pigtails, wearing a colorful striped shirt and a beaded necklace. She is looking down at a yellow book she is holding. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent blue overlay.

We agree. What we will do is protect the most important things in our schools. Our children deserve that.

***ACTION – HELP THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST***

Invest in schools and individual students who need the extra help. Too many students are struggling to meet the provincial standards. According to the government, there are 300 elementary schools where less than half of the students are passing provincial tests. We must also do more to help kids with special needs. All kids benefit when those with special needs have the attention they deserve because it allows teachers to meet the needs of those individual students and the needs of the entire class. We will invest some of the savings we achieve elsewhere in the budget in extra support for schools that are struggling and children with special needs who are having a hard time keeping up.



Our vision for  
a Better Ontario

All the changes we propose for Ontario have a single goal. We want a province where there is greater prosperity, and that prosperity is shared by all.

It is going to take a few years of hard work, and working together, to achieve that goal. Ontario can once again be the province that others look to when they want to understand what makes an economy soar, what a focused and affordable government looks like, how 21st century schools work, or how to provide health care that really makes us healthier.

Let's look at the rewards that determination will bring. Here's how we see Ontario in ten years.

*It's almost impossible to visit a news website these days without seeing some kind of story about how well Ontario is doing. For the sixth straight year (and the eighth out of the last ten), Ontario led Canada in economic growth, job creation and foreign direct investment. Premiers, governors, mayors and foreign leaders are beating a path to Ontario to forge new trade partnerships and business relationships with a rapidly growing and innovative Ontario corporate sector or to promote their products and services to an expanding middle class.*

*The best way to describe Ontario's ascendancy in North America is that things just got moving. Gridlock that condemned GTA commuters to among the longest commute times in the world has been dramatically relieved by historic investments in subways and highways. But more than just subways and roads were built. With new office towers in downtown Toronto, reinvigorated industry in the southwest, ten new mines in the north, tech and biotech jobs in the 519 and Ottawa and an expanding rural economy, Ontario is firing on all cylinders. Talent was lured and entrepreneurship fostered through a tax regime that rewarded risk taking and hard work instead of punishing it.*

*While the numbers are all good, the most important thing for Ontarians is that they know their everyday lives have gotten better. It's easier to find and keep a job. Pay is up because the expanding economy has driven up wages. Lower taxes leave a bit more in our pockets every week. We don't worry so much about health care. The big decisions are now made by the people who know us, in our own communities. With health care spending under control, we know that help will be there for our parents and children, and for us, when we need it. We feel confident about our children's future. Test scores are up in their schools, and that tells us they are mastering the skills they will need to succeed. More and more of them are going to community colleges and getting the kind of well-paying jobs in the trades that people didn't think about even a few years ago.*

*Looking back, people sometimes wonder why we didn't figure all this out sooner.*

*There's no doubt that Ontarians have a new sense of confidence. People in other provinces are sometimes a bit jealous of us, but we're proud of what we accomplished. We worked together to achieve it, with a sense of common purpose.*

*Part of what makes us proud is that we didn't leave anyone behind. With improved mobility and communications technologies, the term "disabled" has almost lost its meaning. We ask what people can do, not what they can't do. With a more confident and secure middle class, volunteerism is way up. When we see a problem in our communities, we get involved and fix it. We're glad to say that unemployment among new Ontarians is way down as we finally made use of the skills that got people to Canada in the first place. More and more Ontario seniors, secure in their retirement, exercise their right to spoil the grandchildren, as they look with quiet pride at the great province they helped build.*

*Ontario is unquestionably on the move and it's taking everybody with it.*

That's the future Ontario can have, but we must be willing to accept change to get there. The Ontario PC Party has offered a detailed plan to reach that bright future. We hope you will endorse it on Election Day. Together, we can make Ontario great again.





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