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STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

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The Honourable Dave Levac, MPP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Sir,

Your Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs has the honour to present its Report on its Pre-Budget Consultation 2016 and commends it to the House.

Soo Wong, MPP
Chair of the Committee

Queen's Park
April 2016

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

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1st Session, 41st Parliament

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
MINISTRY OF FINANCE	1
Fiscal Strategies	1
Taxation Issues	2
Corporate Tax	2
Aviation Fuel Tax	2
Diesel Fuel Tax	3
Employer Health Tax	3
Gas Tax	3
Railway Taxation	3
Personal Income Tax	3
Tax Credits	3
Underground Economy	3
Construction Sector	3
Contraband Tobacco/Tobacco Taxes	4
Sharing Economy	4
Additional Responsibilities of the Ministry of Finance	4
Pension-related Matters	5
ADVICE CONCERNING OTHER MINISTRIES	5
ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS	6
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS	7
ATTORNEY GENERAL	7
CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES	7
CITIZENSHIP, IMMIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE	8
COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES	8
Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)	8
Ontario Works	9
Poverty Reduction	10
Rates Reform	10
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES	10
Bail, Probation and Parole	10
Capital Funding	10
Operational Funding	11
First Nations Policing	11
Other Matters	11
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE	12
Economic Development	12
Employment	13
Infrastructure	13
EDUCATION	13

ENERGY	15
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE	16
GOVERNMENT AND CONSUMER SERVICES	17
HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE	18
LHINs and Related Health Service Providers	18
Long-Term Care	19
Hospice/Palliative Care	19
Caregiver Supports	20
Health Policy and Research	20
Specific Conditions	20
Alzheimer's and Dementia	20
Pregnancy and Infant Loss	21
Nurses and Nursing	21
Pharmacare, Pharmacists and Drug Costs	21
Primary Care	22
Health Promotion	22
LABOUR	23
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING	24
NATURAL RESOURCES AND FORESTRY	26
NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AND MINES	27
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION	27
TOURISM, CULTURE AND SPORT	27
TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES	28
TRANSPORTATION	30
TREASURY BOARD	31
LIST OF WITNESSES AND WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS	32
APPENDIX A – DISSENTING OPINION OF THE PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE	41
APPENDIX B – DISSENTING OPINION OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE	45

INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs conducted its 2016 pre-Budget hearings in January and February 2016 in Hamilton, Windsor, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, and Ottawa, and for two days in Toronto at Queen's Park.

Witnesses included experts invited by the Committee to present budgetary advice, representatives from associations, community groups, organizations and unions, and interested individuals. The Committee also received presentations from municipalities and their associations, as well as local administrative bodies and service agencies exercising delegated authority and/or receiving transfer payments.

In total, 146 witnesses appeared before the Committee. In addition, about 114 written submissions came from interested individuals and groups who did not appear before the Committee. Two of those submissions represent e-mails supporting a single recommendation, from more than 400 individuals in one case and from almost 60 in the other.

The pre-Budget consultation provides an important forum for citizens, stakeholders, and local government partners to discuss their social, economic, and program-related concerns with elected representatives. The submissions to the Committee are a vital part of the political process by which governments are held accountable for their decision making and administration by the electorate.

This Report is an overview of the main issues raised by presenters during the pre-Budget consultation. The Committee heard opposing viewpoints on many issues. Details of submissions by witnesses and their responses to questions by Committee Members can be found in the Committee Proceedings in *Hansard*. A list of witnesses, as well as the organizations and individuals from whom written briefs were received, appears at the end of the Report. An electronic copy of this document will appear on the Committee Reports web site.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Fiscal Strategies

The Committee heard many calls for the Province to abandon its deficit elimination target date, based on concerns about the sustainability of a continued underfunding of public services.¹ The Canadian Taxpayers Federation, recommended program funding restraint to restore fiscal balance, based on its belief in the long term unsustainability of deficit financing.

Most advice presented to the Committee was to increase public expenditure, particularly in the portfolios of health and social assistance, and make strategic investments in infrastructure projects. Witnesses from the anti-poverty, social

¹ Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, CUPE Ontario, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, OPSEU Hospital Support Division, and Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

services, health care, and labour sectors, among others, recommended strengthening supports such as affordable housing, social services, and education and training, to enhance the capacity of the not-for-profit sector to provide effective programs.²

Taxation Issues

The Retail Council of Canada and the Canadian Taxpayers Federation opposed the implementation of new taxes or increases to current taxes, believing that Ontario should be a competitive tax jurisdiction. Witnesses like the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions spoke more generally about the need to increase taxes or cancel all tax cuts in order to restore the government's revenue capacity.

Corporate Tax

A broad coalition of anti-poverty, social services, health care, labour organizations, and individuals, both in person and in the written submissions, called for the elimination of reductions in the corporate tax rate that has resulted in a reduction of revenue.³

Aviation Fuel Tax

The National Airlines Council of Canada suggested the government work with all partners to develop a sustainable approach to aviation fuel taxes. The Air Transport Association of Canada concurred and also requested that flight schools receive fuel tax remissions to remain competitive with other jurisdictions. The Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce requested that Northwestern Ontario be exempted from paying aviation fuel taxes.

² Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits, DeafBlind Ontario Services, Income Security Advocacy Centre, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, ODSP Action Coalition, City of Thunder Bay, Toronto and York Region Labour Council, Home of Their Own, Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario, Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa, Association of Ontario Health Centres, Hamilton Community Legal Clinic, Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, Poverty Free Thunder Bay, Somerset West Community Health Centre, Hamilton Community Legal Clinic, Chatham-Kent Health Coalition, Sarnia-Lambton Health Coalition, Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre, Ontario Medical Association – Dr. Albert Ng, Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, Ontario Medical Association, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, OPSEU - Jeff Arbus, OPSEU Hospital Support Division, Spinal Cord Injury Ontario, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, City of Thunder Bay, Daryl Webber, Windsor-Essex Health Coalition, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, Ontario Region, Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, Municipality of Brook Alvinston, Region of Peel - Frank Dale, David Szwarc, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario, Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Good Shepherd Centres, Provincial Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee, Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, Legal Assistance of Windsor/Community Legal Aid.

³ Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Toronto and York Region Labour Council, CUPE Ontario, Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Thunder Bay Health Coalition, Unifor, Ottawa and District Labour Council, and Ontario Council of Hospital Unions.

Diesel Fuel Tax

Resolute Forest Products recommended working with the forestry industry to determine “off road” (hauling of materials into a mill site on private roads built and maintained by a company for its primary use) usage and ways to rebate haulers for the cost of the fuel tax equivalent for that portion of fuel consumed off road. The Ontario Trucking Association suggested that the government dedicate fuel tax revenue to transportation infrastructure maintenance.

Employer Health Tax

The Retail Council of Canada’s proposed tax reforms included raising the exemption threshold for the Employer Health Tax (EHT). The Toronto and York Region Labour Council recommended removing exemptions from the EHT.

Gas Tax

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation and Charles Fisher recommended transparency on gas tax revenue spending. The Canadian Taxpayers Federation also suggested eliminating the tax-on-tax portion of gas taxes. TTCriders advised the Province to increase the gas tax and share the revenues with municipalities to fund public transit.

Railway Taxation

The province was asked to modernize railway taxation by the Northern Ontario Services Deliverers Association, who recommended implementing a dollar per mile taxation structure for railway companies to pay in right of way taxes.

Personal Income Tax

Several changes were proposed for personal income tax that would generate more revenue from high income earners.⁴ Charles Fisher and the Canadian Taxpayers Federation suggested reducing personal income tax rates.

Tax Credits

Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards/Invest Ottawa outlined a tax credit to stimulate private sector investment in innovation technologies.

Underground Economy

Construction Sector

To counter the underground contractor economy, Ontario’s homebuilders requested a consumer-focused tax credit that would also provide incentives for energy efficiency upgrades to existing or new properties.⁵

⁴ Charles Fisher, Social Action Committee, Ontario Association of Social Workers, Hamilton Branch, Unifor, and Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario.

Contraband Tobacco/Tobacco Taxes

Imperial Tobacco Canada, the Ontario Convenience Stores Association, and the Ontario Korean Businessmen's Association requested a hold on tax rates for legal tobacco products; this was countered by calls from the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Society for increases on tobacco excise taxes.

Numerous organizations suggested partnering with the federal government and conducting a public awareness campaign as ways to strengthen efforts to curtail contraband tobacco.⁶ The Ontario Convenience Stores Association suggested developing a training protocol for tobacco handlers.

Sharing Economy

Ottawa Tourism, the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce, and the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario called for the Province to take a proactive role in regulating the sharing/underground economy, with an eye towards economic growth.

Peter Pellier urged the Province not to pass Bill 131, the *Opportunity in the Sharing Economy Act, 2015*. Gerald H. Manley urged the Province not to pass Schedule 3 of Bill 131.

Additional Responsibilities of the Ministry of Finance

The non-tax responsibilities of the Ministry of Finance also attracted demands, such as consulting with financial advisors and planners on proposed regulations, modernizing Ontario's alcohol sales system to create more market opportunities for spirits and wine, and advice regarding the impacts of privatizing the lottery and gaming sector.⁷

Several credit unions requested specific reforms (increasing deposit insurance, maintaining the present tax rate for credit unions, allowing credit unions to compete for deposits by municipalities, universities, school boards, and hospitals) to make their sector more competitive.⁸

The Insurance Bureau of Canada requested support for a national flood insurance program. The Ontario Trial Lawyers Association recommended legislative limits on the number of medical examinations and the frequency of those examinations to remove barriers to injured people who are claiming

⁵ Hamilton-Halton Home Builders' Association, Ontario Home Builders' Association, Thunder Bay Home Builders Association, and Windsor Essex Home Builders' Association.

⁶ National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco, Canadian Cancer Society, Imperial Tobacco Canada, and Ontario Korean Businessmen's Association.

⁷ Spirits Canada/Association of Canadian Distillers, Winery and Grower Alliance of Ontario, Canadian Taxpayers Federation, Bill Nafziger, Wine Council of Ontario, Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada, Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada, and Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce.

⁸ Central 1 Credit Union, FirstOntario Credit Union, Motor City Community Credit Union, and Alterna Savings and Credit Union Ltd.

accident benefits, and to improve the treatment of victims of motor vehicle accidents.

Pension-related Matters

The Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP) was a divisive issue. A number of witnesses expressed general support for a provincial pension plan.⁹ The Canadian Taxpayers Federation, Bill Nafziger, and the National Citizens Coalition urged the government to halt all plans for the ORPP.

While some witnesses brought concerns and questions about specific implementation details (Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Ontario, Ontario Trucking Association), other organizations had specific recommendations such as: exemptions under the ORPP for the self-employed (Ontario Real Estate Association), the categories of employees to be covered by the ORPP (United Food Commercial Workers Canada), and a low-income threshold (Ontario Convenience Stores Association).

Witnesses had different suggestions for reviewing the ORPP, prompted by concerns about the timeline for implementation. These included Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Ontario's call to pause implementation, the Progressive Contractors Association of Canada's support for a phased implementation, the Ontario Trucking Association and Ontario Chamber of Commerce's suggestions for a more gradual phase-in period, and the Canadian Beverage Association's call for a publicly available economic impact analysis prior to moving ahead with the proposed plan.

Some witnesses called for the Plan to be abandoned altogether in support of a strengthened Canada Pension Plan.¹⁰

Pensions in general prompted a range of advice, from Essar Steel Algoma Inc.'s very specific proposals on pension issues, to suggestions from OPTrust and the CAAT Pension Plan intended to address the promotion and regulation of defined benefit pension plans.

ADVICE CONCERNING OTHER MINISTRIES

Conscious that the Budget pertains to all government programs, witnesses brought proposals about a broad range of programs concerning almost every Ministry. While many requests focus on funding, changes to program rules and

⁹ CAAT Pension Plan, Hamilton, Burlington, and Oakville Chapter of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada, Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan, Hamilton and District Labour Council, and OPTrust

¹⁰ Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Canadian Taxpayers Federation, Ontario Chamber of Commerce, National Citizens Coalition, Canadian Beverage Association, Bill Nafziger, Ontario Real Estate Association, Progressive Contractors Association of Canada, Ontario Trucking Association, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Ontario, Retail Council of Canada, Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women, United Food Commercial Workers Canada, Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, and West Ottawa Board of Trade.

suggested regulatory reforms may also have fiscal implications. Themes prominent in 2016 included the following:

- finding effective ways to ensure that the needs of the most disadvantaged or vulnerable in society can be adequately met;
- addressing the constraints on the healthcare system;
- fostering an open and competitive business environment;
- investing in strategic infrastructure projects and focusing on job creation and innovation; and
- mitigating the costs associated with compliance with government regulations, directives, and guidelines.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Infrastructure investment for First Nations communities emerged as a prevailing theme. The Chiefs of Ontario requested funding to build capacity for First Nations participation in environmental decision making.

The Union of Ontario Indians, the Mamaweswen North Shore Tribal Council, and the Serpent River First Nation, seeking inclusion in all activities affecting their traditional lands, asked that the Province negotiate resource-revenue benefits and environmental accountability agreements, and fund training and skills development to enable First Nations members to participate in jobs created by resource development within their territories.

The Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund invited the government to invest more heavily in Aboriginal economic development initiatives, and the Anishinabek Police Service requested funding to update Aboriginal police services.

The Union of Ontario Indians requested additional funding for First Nations agencies to address the over-representation of First Nations children and youth in protection services. Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services requested funding commitments to provide culturally appropriate services to members of the North Shore First Nations on and off First Nations reserves throughout the districts of Sudbury and Algoma and to other Aboriginal First Nations in the Algoma District. Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services also requested funding to support the development of the Anishinabek Nation Children and Families Advocate Office, to address child welfare concerns.

The Union of Ontario Indians requested the Province engage the Anishinabek Nation on expanding the scope of prescription drug abuse programming, including mental health and addictions and reformatting the distribution of funds to strategic methods that better address the challenges faced by Anishinabek citizens.

AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

The Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition asked that the government increase its commitment to the Risk Management Program.

The Organic Council of Ontario and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture urged the Province to support agricultural research, encourage commercialization, and promote organic farming and the adoption of innovative on-farm technologies.

Advice from the agriculture sector on expanding natural gas service can be found in the section on Infrastructure under the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure.

Fertilizer Canada urged the Province to appeal to the federal government for policies and regulations to ensure that transportation remains competitive for Ontario's farmers and the fertilizer industry.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Timea Nagy called for the Province to create a Human Trafficking Coordination Centre to combat human trafficking province-wide.

Program specific recommendations for this Ministry can be found throughout this Report.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

Many groups sought increases in the Ontario Child Benefit (OCB) and addressed the elimination of OCB-related reductions in social assistance benefits.¹¹ The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies sought enhanced funding for the deployment of the Child Protection Information Network (CPIN). Legal Assistance of Windsor/Community Legal Aid highlighted the effects of underemployment and precarious employment on youth.

The Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth suggested provincial savings could be realized by moving group care and foster care to private operators. The Ontario Association of Children's Rehabilitation Services proposed transferring the current school and community rehabilitation file from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services as a means of centralizing children's electronic records and facilitating seamless service.

Groups such as the City of Brampton and Koala Place Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (Cornwall) had specific requests for support for existing programs to help children and youth in crisis.

¹¹ Association of Ontario Health Centres, Income Security Advocacy Centre, Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, Legal Assistance of Windsor/Community Legal Aid, Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential.

CITIZENSHIP, IMMIGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards/Invest Ottawa advised creating policies that allow educated immigrants to use their skills and talents to stimulate research and innovation. The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation recommended a coordinated intergovernmental approach to encouraging new immigrants to settle in Northern Ontario.

The Ontario Trucking Association also called on the Province to review its reliance on the federal National Occupation Classification (NOC) for determining eligibility for the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP).

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

A prevalent theme that emerged from the hearings was how the lack of access to affordable, secure housing serves as a barrier to lifting people out of poverty. Recommendations specific to affordable housing can be found under the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

Witnesses recommended immediate rate increases for the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), and indexing future rate increases to inflation.¹²

Other measures recommended included:

- exempting any new federal child benefits from being included in calculations determining income for ODSP;¹³
- amend legislation to enable a person living with a disability to live a better life free from poverty (Provincial Network on Developmental Services);
- increase the amounts of assets, financial gifts, child support, and inheritance an ODSP recipient can hold without having their ODSP benefit clawed back (Dell Clark);
- including the families of ODSP recipients in the raise in income supports and allowing spouses to keep more earned income (ODSP Action Coalition, Income Security Advocacy Centre, and Barb Wilson);
- reversing cuts to the ODSP work-related benefit (Dominique Radwanski, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada);

¹² Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits, DeafBlind Ontario Services, Income Security Advocacy Centre, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, ODSP Action Coalition, Poverty Free Thunder Bay, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Jordon Schmidt, Brian Lamour, and Dominique Radwanski.

¹³ Income Security Advocacy Centre, ODSP Action Coalition, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, and Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential.

- including an allowance for household infrastructure (e.g., furniture, utensils) in ODSP (ODSP Action Coalition); and
- assuring access to dental, vision care, and other health benefits for all ODSP recipients (ODSP Action Coalition).

Ontario Works

Many witnesses urged the immediate adoption of rate increases to Ontario Works, prompted by concerns about the adequacy of Ontario's social assistance programs.¹⁴

Other measures recommended included:

- enhancing the Ontario Child Benefit by \$100 per child;¹⁵
- exempting any new federal child benefits from being included in calculations determining income for Ontario Works;¹⁶
- increasing asset and income limits (Hamilton Community Legal Clinic, Community Living Toronto, and Social Action Committee, Ontario Association of Social Workers, Hamilton Branch);
- exempting child care payments from income assistance benefits;¹⁷
- preventing claw backs on child support received from benefits (ACORN Canada);
- making the pursuit of child support voluntary (Income Security Advocacy Centre); and
- moving from a rent subsidy towards a housing allowance model (Ann Hysert).

Municipalities like Windsor and municipal organizations such as Ontario Municipal Social Services Association asked that municipalities be reimbursed for the costs associated with implementing the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) and that the current per caseload funding ratio be continued.

¹⁴ Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa, Association of Ontario Health Centres, Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits, Hamilton Community Legal Clinic, Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, Poverty Free Thunder Bay, Somerset West Community Health Centre, Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, and The Corporation of the City of Windsor.

¹⁵ Association of Ontario Health Centres, Income Security Advocacy Centre, Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, Legal Assistance of Windsor/Community Legal Aid, and Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential.

¹⁶ Income Security Advocacy Centre, ODSP Action Coalition, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, and Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential

¹⁷ Association of Ontario Health Centres, Income Security Advocacy Centre, Legal Assistance of Windsor/Community Legal Aid, and ODSP Action Coalition.

Poverty Reduction

The Association of Ontario Health Centres and the Ontario Association of Social Workers suggested the government build sufficient revenue tools for an integrated poverty reduction strategy. Poverty Free Thunder Bay requested increased funding for street patrols to support those in extreme poverty in high-risk communities.

Rates Reform

Several groups recommended the Province establish a permanent arms-length agency using an evidenced-based lens to set social assistance rates.¹⁸ The ODSP Action Coalition advocated for the inclusion of people with disabilities on any independent rates-setting panel.

Witnesses said that addressing the specific requirements of those with disabilities or complex needs at different stages in their lives allows them to participate fully in their communities.¹⁹ DeafBlind Ontario Services indicated the importance of funding for deafblind intervenor services.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

The Committee heard from a larger representation of witnesses from the corrections sector, compared with previous years.

Bail, Probation and Parole

The John Howard Society of Ontario requested improvements to bail administration and expanded program capacity to facilitate access to bail from marginalized populations. They also urged the Province to invest in transitional housing for those awaiting trial who are homeless or lack a fixed address.

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union - Gord Longhi requested that the Ministry hire additional parole/probation officers and reduce the caseload of parole/probation officers. A representative from OPSEU also requested funding for GPS technology to monitor individuals on probation.

Capital Funding

The City of Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay Jail (OPSEU) requested a feasibility and facility development study for a new correctional facility in Thunder Bay, describing a dire state in the current facility, chronic overcrowding, a lack of social supports and programming, and inadequate recreation facilities for those in custody.

¹⁸ Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, Legal Assistance of Windsor/Community Legal Aid, Hamilton Community Legal Clinic, and ODSP Action Coalition.

¹⁹ Community Living Toronto, Caledon Area Families For Inclusion, and Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, and Provincial Network on Developmental Services.

Other requests made by various presenters included funding for equipment such as full body scanners or bullet/slash/stab-resistant vests, and for an updated records management system.²⁰

Operational Funding

Many groups urged the Committee to recommend hiring new correctional officers (300 full-time, and 500 fixed-term).²¹ Several witnesses advocated for health and safety and wellness initiatives, including mental health training for officers, post-traumatic stress support groups, and early intervention services.²²

First Nations Policing

The Anishinabek Police Service and the Chiefs of Ontario asked for funding solutions for First Nations communities where policing problems include a shortage of officers and inadequate equipment and training.

Other Matters

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation asked the Province to amend the *Police Services Act* to give police chiefs the power to suspend officers without pay when they have been charged with a criminal offence.

Gerry Bennett asked for more funding for fire services. Liz Huff asked the government to provide a subsidy for private rural retirement homes to install sprinklers as mandated by the province.

²⁰ Thunder Bay, The Thunder Bay Jail (OPSEU), OPSEU - Adult Corrections, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, and Probation Officers Association of Ontario.

²¹ OPSEU - Adult Corrections, OPSEU Corrections Division, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre, Police Association of Ontario, and Probation Officers Association of Ontario.

²² OPSEU - Adult Corrections, OPSEU Corrections Division, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre, and Police Association of Ontario.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Economic Development

Witnesses strongly supported the creation of a business climate that will retain and attract manufacturing investment and employment, and focus employment in Northern and rural Ontario.²³ The bio-economy industry was identified as a potential growth sector (Bioindustrial Innovation Canada, Ontario Federation of Agriculture). The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation and Unifor recommended policies focused on adding value to resource extraction.

A number of stakeholders requested accelerated implementation of the Open for Business initiative. The Committee heard recommendations to evaluate the full impact of all regulations on commerce and industry prior to their adoption, backed by stakeholders who argued that regulations not adding economic value should be eliminated.²⁴

Witnesses advocated for economic development opportunities for their particular sectors:

- programming support for continued growth in retail and food service (Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers);
- creating an environment to support a diverse, healthy, and competitive manufacturing sector (Fertilizer Canada, Unifor, and Canadian Fuels Association);
- funding for capacity building, economic development, and innovation that would lead to benefits in rural economies (Rural Ontario Municipal Association); and
- continuing to sustain robust sectors in steel, manufacturing, and related value-added production (Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation, Unifor).

Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Ontario sought incentives for small- and medium-sized businesses. Michael Nitefor and the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce requested the Province take steps to foster a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation. Futurepreneur Canada requested specific funding to allow the organization to continue supporting young entrepreneurs to scale and grow their business and to service newcomer entrepreneurs in launching their businesses.

²³ Canadian Fuels Association, Rural Ontario Municipal Association, Greater Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce, Futurepreneur Canada, Unifor, and Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers.

²⁴ Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Retail Council of Canada, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association, Northern Ontario Services Deliverers Association, Chemistry Industry Association of Canada, Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association, and Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Ontario.

Stakeholders encouraged a cautious approach to the Trans-Pacific Partnership, concerned about the impacts of this and similar trade agreements on municipalities, domestic industry, export sales, and local employment.²⁵

Employment

Charles Fisher recommended the consideration of job creation prior to the government adopting new legislation. Ryerson University requested core funding for Magnet, a not-for-profit social initiative that uses data and technology to connect job seekers with Ontario employers.

Infrastructure

The need for infrastructure funding emerged as a prominent trend. Many groups supported infrastructure funding to facilitate economic growth.²⁶ Liz Huff called for a more streamlined application processes to access infrastructure investments. The Cement Association of Canada proposed that revenues from the Province's cap-and-trade program be spent on long-term infrastructure investments.

Specific requests for infrastructure investments for housing infrastructure can be found under the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Specific requests for investments in transportation and transit infrastructure can be found under the Ministry of Transportation.

The Rural Ontario Municipal Association, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce identified ensuring a robust and stable broadband network as a key area for Provincial investment.

Many groups supported the expansion of natural gas service, particularly in Northern Ontario.²⁷

EDUCATION

Stakeholders identified a need for more funding flexibility to meet local needs and priorities and better accountability for funding (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation). The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board requested a multi-year funding framework. The Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential urged that full funding be provided for full-day kindergarten.

Committee Members received conflicting advice regarding the structuring of school systems, with some advocating for the maintenance of all four publicly

²⁵ Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Hamilton and District Labour Council, Hamilton, Burlington, and Oakville Chapter of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada, Toronto and York Region Labour Council, and Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers.

²⁶ The Corporation of the City of Windsor, City of Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, Ontario Home Builders' Association, Thunder Bay Home Builders Association, Atikokan, and Steve Clark.

²⁷ Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Union Gas, Ontario Society of Professional Engineers, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and Enbridge Gas Distribution.

funded systems (Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association), and some calling for the elimination of the Catholic streams (Bill Nafziger, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, and Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation).

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and the advocacy group Fix Our Schools highlighted the need for increased investments for proper facility maintenance and continued capital support, and had specific recommendations to allow school boards to access Education Development Charges and use these monies for repairs, capital projects, or land purchase.

Early childhood education and day care/child care were a primary concern of many witnesses. There was wide support for increased availability of low-cost, high quality child care and investment in child care professionals and subsidies.²⁸ The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and the Association for Early Childhood Educators Ontario proposed specific suggestions for designated preparation time, professional development, and higher wages for early childhood educators.

Greater support was requested for education delivery for special needs students, adult learners, LGBTQ students, English language learners, and students with autism.²⁹

Advice from teacher groups on class size included:

- eliminating combined kindergarten and grade 1 classes (Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association);
- creating a hard 26 person cap for full-day kindergarten (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Thames Valley Teacher Local, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, and Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association);
- maintaining existing primary class size caps in grades 1-3 (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Thames Valley Teacher Local); and
- creating a hard cap of 24 students for grades 4-8 (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Thames Valley Teacher Local, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario).

Teachers also brought policy suggestions about Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) testing including eliminating EQAO testing entirely

²⁸ Hamilton and District Labour Council, Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, United Food Commercial Workers Canada, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Thames Valley Teacher Local, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, and Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

²⁹ Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Thames Valley Teacher Local, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Autism Services Waterloo Region, and Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association.

(Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation), or moving to a random-sample model for student testing (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Thames Valley Teacher Local, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association).

The Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation requested exemptions from EQAO fees charged for First Nations schools. Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services and the Chiefs of Ontario called for the Province to become involved in First Nations education development and implementation.

ENERGY

The Committee heard objections to any sale or privatization of Hydro One from a majority of witnesses who addressed this topic, stating their concerns.³⁰ The Canadian Taxpayers Federation expressed support for the partial sale of Hydro One.

Concerns regarding the affordability of Ontario's electricity emerged as another dominant trend in the hearings. Witnesses representing various sectors (including health care, manufacturing, industry, and farm/agricultural production) and individuals urged the province to acknowledge the critical need for sufficient, stable, and affordable electrical power.³¹ Specific recommendations addressing this critical need included:

- mandating provincial energy regulators to amend the beneficiary-pay model to encourage further greenhouse vegetable farm and sector growth (Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers);
- developing a well-supported cluster system (Bioindustrial Innovation Canada);
- developing a plan to reduce the marginal cost of electricity to be in line with the cost in other jurisdictions (EACOM Timber Corporation); and
- establishing a farm/industrial electricity rate (Ontario Federation of Agriculture).

Competitive long-term rates were proposed for economic preservation and development, particularly in Northern Ontario and for First Nations communities, and pricing certainty was identified as a must for industrial and commercial

³⁰ Jerry Ackerman, CUPE Ontario, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Ottawa and District Labour Council, Ontario Federation of Labour, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Toronto and York Region Labour Council, Unifor, and Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential.

³¹ Cement Association of Canada, Rural Ontario Municipal Association, City of Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, Thunder Bay, and United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

growth.³² The Ontario Energy Association recommend removing financial and regulatory barriers to consolidation and private investment.

Essar Steel Algoma Inc., Resolute Forest Products, and Domtar urged the Province to continue the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate (NIER) program.

Witnesses presented the Members with suggestions for incentives to support certain sectors and to respond to, or reward green energy initiatives, such as:

- incentives to recognize and reward the use of biomass and other renewable energy sources (Domtar);³³
- addressing the cumbersome process in accessing incentives under saveONenergy (Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce);
- energy rebates for recreational facilities (Town of Marathon); and
- restoring the full integrity of conservation programs available to the forest industry (Resolute Forest Products).

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The Province was encouraged to invest in the low carbon economy (Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bio-Economy, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Ontario, and Ottawa Centre Eco-District), to support organizations that facilitate achieving low carbon results (Toronto Atmospheric Fund and Ottawa Centre Eco-District), and invest in climate change mitigation and adaptation measures (Ontario Federation of Agriculture).

Cap and trade emerged as a dominant theme in witness deputations; concerns were raised about its impact on business competitiveness,³⁴ and on low and middle income Ontarians (Ontario Federation of Labour). The Members heard suggestions on how to recognize greenhouse gas reductions already achieved by industry. Essar Steel Algoma Inc. requested a credit under the cap and trade regime for greenhouse gas reductions already achieved by Canadian steel producers. The Retail Council of Canada requested similar recognition for investments companies have made in lowering hydro costs and investing in energy conservation solutions. Domtar and the Ontario Forest Industries Association requested recognition and full emissions allocations, respectively, for a sector that has reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 30%.

³² Chiefs of Ontario, Cement Association of Canada, Rural Ontario Municipal Association, Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, Thunder Bay, United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Ontario, Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers, Bioindustrial Innovation Canada, EACOM Timber Corporation, and Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

³³ Domtar, Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce, Town of Marathon, Resolute Forest Products, and Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

³⁴ Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers, Ontario Forest Industries Association, Essar Steel Algoma Inc., Cement Association of Canada, and Fertilizer Canada.

The Canadian Fuels Association suggested developing a carbon pricing mechanism as an alternative; others called for a halt to cap and trade altogether (Pat Sayeau, Canadian Taxpayers Federation, and National Citizens Coalition). The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario expressed support for cap and trade and along with Environmental Defence recommended limiting exemptions and free emission permits under the program. Environmental Defence also flagged that, based on its projections, excessive allocation of free permits could result in foregone revenue for the Province. Many groups had suggestions for where the province should direct cap and trade revenue (Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Enbridge Gas Distribution, and Ontario Trucking Association).

The Committee also heard specific ideas relating to the Ministry's portfolio. The International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers suggested mechanical insulation upgrades to achieve energy efficiencies. The Trillium Automobile Dealers Association recommended phasing out Drive Clean testing. The Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers discussed toxics reduction.

The Canadian Beverage Association and the Retail Council of Canada had suggestions for updating waste diversion regulations. The Ottawa Chamber of Commerce Environment and Sustainability Committee requested funding for municipal environmental sustainability initiatives.

The Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women, Environmental Defence and the Canadian Environmental Law Association came forward with advice about the quantity and quality of Ontario's water and the Great Lakes ecosystem. Ontario Conservation Authorities requested funding in support of their flood management duties.

GOVERNMENT AND CONSUMER SERVICES

Private sector groups highlighted government procurement practices as a priority. The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction requested provisions in government procurement policies to ensure that government-contracted companies pay their employees a living wage. Essar Steel Algoma Inc. requested the Province adopt favourable procurement policies that allow Canadian steel companies to compete for government projects.

The Trillium Automobile Dealers Association proposed removing exemptions for manufacturers from the all-in pricing rules in the *Motor Vehicle Dealers Act*. The Association of Victims for Accident Insurance Reform urged the government to enact legislation to protect consumers from fraud and harmful business practices.

HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE

The Committee heard from many voices calling for predictable funding increases to the health system (to the national per capita average),³⁵ and a restoration of hospital funding to a level that will meet hospital inflation and prevent service cuts.³⁶ Arguments were presented for (Sault Area Hospital) and against (Sault and Area Health Coalition, Erno Gulyas) the privatization of hospital services and construction.

The Association of Ontario Health Centres and the Ontario Community Support Association also requested funding to address information management and information technology system shortfalls.

LHINs and Related Health Service Providers

Providing adequate care was emphasized for all settings, such as home care, long-term care, palliative care, and restorative care. Investments in these settings, such as home care,³⁷ and alternate level of care,³⁸ were repeatedly presented as alternatives to more costly hospital care, and as a means of easing health system pressures.

Family Services Windsor-Essex, Family Service Ontario and Thunder Bay Counselling Centre requested that their respective LHINs engage them in identifying potential cost and clinical benefits of diverting people with mental health and addiction problems away from Emergency Department services to more accessible and appropriate community-based services.

The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario suggested an expanded mandate for LHINs to include many elements of an entire regional health system, while dissolving Community Care Access Centres (CCACs). The Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres recommended leveraging CCACs' existing technology infrastructure to better integrate home and community care.

³⁵ OPSEU - Jeff Arbus, Chatham-Kent Health Coalition, Sarnia-Lambton Health Coalition, Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre, Ontario Medical Association - Dr. Albert Ng, Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, Ontario Medical Association, OPSEU Hospital Support Division, Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Spinal Cord Injury Ontario, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, Thunder Bay, Daryl Webber, Windsor-Essex Health Coalition, Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario, Association of Ontario Health Centres, and Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres.

³⁶ Chatham Kent Health Coalition, Ricky Dale, Marie DellaVedova, Essex County Health Coalition, Ontario Hospital Association, Ontario Health Coalition, Sault and Area Health Coalition, Ontario Nurses' Association, Thunder Bay Health Coalition, Unifor, Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario, Windsor Regional Hospital, and Ottawa Health Coalition.

³⁷ Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres, Ontario Hospital Association, Sault Area Hospital, Victorian Order of Nurses Canada, Ontario Community Support Association, Home Care Ontario, Ontario Nurses' Association, and Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors.

³⁸ Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. Hamilton, Burlington, and Oakville Chapter of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada, Bernice Whalen, Unifor Local 299, and Judy Greenwood-Speers.

Long-Term Care

Long-term care (LTC) attracted much attention: additional funding generally,³⁹ an increased minimum standard of care per patient,⁴⁰ and adjustments to specific funding requirements⁴¹ were prevalent themes.

In particular, witnesses addressed the need for:

- investments in small and rural LTC homes (Nancy Buker, Ontario Long Term Care Association);
- behavioural supports (Ontario Long Term Care Association, Champlain Region Family Council Network, and Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors);
- specific staffing requirements (Ontario Kinesiology Association, Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario, and Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors);
- capital projects (Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors, Thunder Bay);
- special dietary considerations (Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors, Champlain Region Family Council Network); and
- treatment of and training for dementia and aggressive behaviours.⁴²

Hospice/Palliative Care

Many groups called for investments in hospice and palliative care.⁴³ Carpenter Hospice, Hospice Palliative Care Ontario, and Algoma Residential Community Hospice asked the province to lift restrictions on the sector that stipulate that

³⁹ Cornwall and District Labour Council, Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, Ontario Hospital Association, Ontario Long Term Care Association, Thunder Bay Health Coalition, United Food Commercial Workers Canada, Windsor-Essex Health Coalition, and Christian Labour Association of Canada.

⁴⁰ Christian Labour Association of Canada, Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors, Ontario Long Term Care Association, Thunder Bay Health Coalition, Unifor Local 299, and Ontario Nurses' Association.

⁴¹ Ontario Community Support Association, Thunder Bay, Hamilton, Burlington, and Oakville Chapter of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada, and Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors.

⁴² Champlain Region Family Council Network, Ontario Long Term Care Association, Unifor Local 299, Hamilton, Burlington, and Oakville Chapter of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada, and Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors.

⁴³ Carpenter Hospice, Hospice Palliative Care Ontario, Algoma Residential Community Hospice, The Hospice of Windsor and Essex County Inc., Hospice Palliative Care Ontario-Marg Poling, Hamilton, Burlington, and Oakville Chapter of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada.

government funding can only be spent on services and not operational costs (such as heat or hydro).

Caregiver Supports

Many groups suggested providing adequate support for caregivers to relieve system pressures.⁴⁴ Investing in caregiver capacity touched on many aspects of the health sector from hospice/palliative care, to long-term care, to persons suffering Alzheimer's and dementia.

The Victorian Order of Nurses Canada, Ontario Community Support Association and Ontario Caregiver Coalition highlighted the need for a Provincial investment in caregiver training and resources. The Victorian Order of Nurses Canada and the Ontario Community Support Association requested caregiver supports in the form of additional respite and adult day programs.

Health Policy and Research

Teaching hospitals advocated the creation of a Health Research Strategy for Ontario (Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario), and requested funding to maintain the Adopting Research to Improve Care (ARTIC) program and the Ontario Research Fund (Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario). The Ontario Bioscience Innovation Organization wrote in support of bioscience research.

Specific Conditions

Stakeholders representing particular conditions, diseases, and ailments (such as Lyme disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's, metabolic syndrome, lung disease, heart and stroke, Parkinson's disease, and multiple sclerosis) presented funding requests for programs and services specific to their cause.⁴⁵

Mental health and addictions services was identified by many as needing the Province's attention, either through general funding support or investments in specific regional programs and services.⁴⁶

Alzheimer's and Dementia

The Alzheimer Society of Ontario focused its requests on facilitating caregiver supports. In particular, it requested that the Province support expanding the Alzheimer Society's partnership with the Reitman Centre of Mount Sinai Hospital

⁴⁴ Ontario Caregiver Coalition, Victorian Order of Nurses Canada, Ontario Community Support Association, Alzheimer Society of Ontario, Carpenter Hospice, Hospice Care Ottawa, and Hospice Palliative Care Ontario-Marg Poling.

⁴⁵ Alzheimer Society of Ontario, Canadian Diabetes Association, Clark, Ontario Kinesiology Association, Ontario Lung Association, Sun County Lyme Awareness Support Group, Metabolic Syndrome Canada, Heart and Stroke Foundation, Durham Region Stroke Recovery Group, and Parkinson Canada, and Class 1 Inc.

⁴⁶ Children's Mental Health Ontario, Thunder Bay Health Coalition, Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex County Branch, Provincial Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee, Sault Area Hospital, and Canadian Mental Health Association York Region and South Simcoe Branch.

to extend its Carers Program. That organization also requested support for the First Link program and the Primary Memory Care Clinics.

Pregnancy and Infant Loss

Many witnesses spoke in support of general funding to support Bill 141, the *Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness, Research and Care Act, 2015* and requested specific funding to strengthen existing pregnancy and infant loss community programs.⁴⁷ Witnesses identified a lack of consistent pregnancy and infant loss service across the province, and stressed the need for the government to invest in training, education, and public awareness on this issue.

Nurses and Nursing

Nurses urged the government to fund policies that create and protect nursing positions,⁴⁸ to unfreeze compensation (Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario - Aric Rankin), and move forward with expanding the scope of practice for nurse practitioners and registered nurses, specifically with regards to prescribing.⁴⁹ The Ontario Nurses' Association stressed the importance of healthy work environments, and highlighted the need for the Province to develop an action plan to address workplace violence for this group.

Pharmacare, Pharmacists and Drug Costs

Members heard suggestions to reduce drug costs (Greater Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce) and create a low-income health benefit to cover prescription drug costs (Hamilton Community Legal Clinic). The Greater Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce also recommended the Province continue consultations with the private sector to ensure the appropriate analysis is compiled related to the costs to taxpayers of any new drug program measures.

The Ontario Pharmacists Association expressed support for the idea of accessibility of medications for all patients. The Association of Ontario Health Centres, the Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women, and the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario - Wendy Pearson requested a provincial pharmacare program.

Other suggestions included:

⁴⁷ Kathleen Cameron, Glenwood United Church/Pregnancy and Infant Loss Network, Daniela Lopez and Javier Díaz, Pregnancy and Infant Loss Network - Shannon Bedard, Pregnancy and Infant Loss Network - Wendy Mouldsdale, Christine Sweeney, Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Roger's House, Maternal/Child Program-Sault Area Hospital, Canadian Mental Health Association York Region and South Simcoe Branch, Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex County Branch, and OPHA.

⁴⁸ Ontario Nurses' Association, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario-Windsor-Essex Chapter, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario - Wendy Pearson, and Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario.

⁴⁹ Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario-Windsor-Essex Chapter, RNO-Rankin, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, and Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario.

- coverage for specific drugs (Pfizer, Canadian Cancer Society),
- expanding the scope of practice for pharmacists to include travel vaccine programs (Ontario Pharmacists' Association, Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada);
- expanding the existing flu shot program (Ontario Pharmacists' Association, Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada); and
- consider expanding Ontario's school-based HPV vaccination program to include boys (Canadian Cancer Society).

Primary Care

Windsor Regional Hospital and the Association of Ontario Health Centres called for reforming the primary care system to move patients out of emergency care.

Dr. Tam and Dr. Yeung asked the Province to review OHIP physician billing. There were also specific recommendations to invest in physician assistants (Canadian Association of Physician Assistants) and fund naturopathic care (Rickey Dale). The Ontario Association of Cardiologists asked the province to reverse funding cuts to non-invasive cardiology testing procedures within the physician services budget and engage the Association to maximize cost savings in cardiac health care spending.

First Nations representatives requested access to equitable health care and funding for specific programs to address drug abuse, mental health and addictions, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.⁵⁰

Health Promotion

The Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Ontario Kinesiology Association advocated for improving access for all Ontarians to healthy foods and physical activity opportunities. The Canadian Beverage Association urged a cautious approach to seeking an attainable compliance regime when devising regulations in support of the *Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015*.

The Province received advice on improving access to dental care in every community, particularly with regards to emergency dental services and dental services to low income Ontarians (Ontario Dental Association, Association of Ontario Health Centres).

The Canadian Cancer Society and the Heart and Stroke Foundation supported continuing or increased funding for Smoke-Free Ontario.

⁵⁰ Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services, Union of Ontario Indians, Association of Ontario Health Centres, and Chiefs of Ontario.

LABOUR

Reform of Ontario's interest arbitration system was a high priority. The Canadian Taxpayers Federation urged the government to amend the interest arbitration system with a narrowing of arbitral discretion. The City of Thunder Bay, the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association asked for the restoration of balance and affordability in the interest arbitration system. Calls for interest arbitration reform were echoed by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

The United Food Commercial Workers Canada (UFCWC) called on the government to consider card-check certification (whereby a union can be certified without a vote) in the 2016 Budget. The government was asked to partner with the UFCWC and the Agriculture Workers Alliance to provide educational resources to seasonal agricultural workers. The Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition called for changes to be made in the *Labour Relations Act* that would facilitate the unionization process for workers in precarious and part-time employment. CUPE Ontario urged the government to create a comprehensive strategy to reverse precarious work.

The Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers asked that any changes contemplated to the *Employment Standards Act* be reviewed for their impact on the Ontario fruit and vegetable sector. The Ontario Federation of Labour recommended the government establish a registration and licensing system for migrant worker employers and recruiters to provide the oversight and data needed for proactive enforcement.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE Ontario) and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) called on the government to provide funding for pay equity. Community Living Ontario and Community Living Toronto recommended changes to pay equity legislation that would allow for in-sector comparators. The Provincial Network on Developmental Services identified changes to pay equity legislation that would alleviate financial strain on agencies, while the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition called for measures that would require all employers to adhere to pay equity with no exemptions for the private sector. Along with CUPE Ontario, the UFCWC and the Toronto and York Region Labour Council called on the government to address the gender wage gap.

Several groups advocated for a \$15 per hour minimum wage.⁵¹ Legal Assistance of Windsor/Community Legal Aid called for an increase to the minimum wage while the Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits urged the government to implement a Basic Income for those in Ontario on OW, ODSP and low wages. The Hamilton and District Labour Council sought assurances that contractors and sub-contractors on the Hamilton Light Rail Transit project will pay their employees a living wage.

⁵¹ Association of Ontario Health Centres, Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, Poverty Free Thunder Bay, Toronto and York Region Labour Council, and Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential.

The Union of Ontario Indians asked that resources be committed to support a partnership with the Anishinabek Nation to conduct research to develop a comprehensive labour market strategy for First Nations people in Ontario.

The Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce asked the government to address the skills gap in the labour market in order to fill skilled jobs in the digital economy in Sault Ste. Marie.

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada proposed the development of innovative services within the province and its federal-provincial Labour Market Agreements that help people with multiple sclerosis and other episodic disabilities keep their jobs.

The Retail Council of Canada asked that Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) premiums be reduced by a minimum of 15% effective 2017 to help offset the impacts of implementing the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP). The Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential urged the government to ask Ontario's Ombudsman to investigate the WSIB's treatment of medical advice and to publish statistics on how frequently this advice is disregarded.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING

Many municipalities and municipal associations requested more funding for the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund to reflect inflationary adjustments.⁵² The Rural Ontario Municipalities Association also advocated that municipalities be permitted to invest in a broader range of investments, based on "prudent investor" principles, and that the eligible list of investors be expanded to include municipal associations.

The Committee heard requests for the Province to provide more predictable infrastructure funding to municipalities.⁵³ The Town of Pelham asked for access to funds like the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund for the proposed Pelham community centre; several citizens spoke against provincial funding of this project. The Town of Pelham asked the government not to penalize municipalities that have exercised financial discipline and wise infrastructure investment.⁵⁴

Municipalities and municipal associations also called for an increase to the "heads and beds fee" or Payments in Lieu of Taxes (e.g., payments on institutions such as hospitals, universities and correctional institutions).⁵⁵ The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Regional Municipality of Waterloo recommended that the City of Toronto's tax tools, such as the authority

⁵² Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston, Rural Ontario Municipal Association, and Town of Marathon.

⁵³ Cement Association of Canada, City of Thunder Bay, Joe Baptista, Ontario Waterpower Association, Rural Ontario Municipal Association, Town of Pelham, United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

⁵⁴ Carolyn Botari, Dell Clark, Joan Comfort, Joseph Montgomery.

⁵⁵ Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association, Northern Ontario Services Deliverers Association, City of Thunder Bay, Regional Municipality of Waterloo.

to charge a land transfer tax, be made available to all municipalities, and asked that the upload of some previously downloaded provincial programs continue to full maturity in 2018. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association urged the Province to abandon plans for future claw backs under the Power Dam Special Payment program. The Ontario Waterpower Association asked for confirmation that no additional property taxes will be levied on power dams.

The Ontario Real Estate Association asked the government to maintain its commitment to exclude municipal land transfer tax as a municipal revenue tool and suggested modernizing the land transfer tax rebate program for first-time home buyers. Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Ontario proposed that Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) assessments consider comparable properties outside of North America, particularly when considering large or unique manufacturing properties.

The Trillium Automobile Dealers Association asked that the authority to impose vehicle taxes not be provided to municipalities. The Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association recommended not providing new hotel/lodging taxation powers to municipalities.

The City of Ottawa asked that municipalities receive assistance to create centralized data management tools that would be made available to all.

The Ontario Association of Architects asked that quality-based selection (QBS) be integrated throughout the procurement chain and promoted to municipalities.

Garry Hull lobbied for a reformed funding model for police services in smaller communities. Vicki Leakey recommended special consideration for less developed areas under the *Planning Standards Act*.

The Committee heard from witnesses seeking support for affordable housing,⁵⁶ transitional housing (City of Thunder Bay), and family housing (Home of Their Own). The Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, Ontario Region (CHFC) proposed the Province work with the federal government to protect co-op housing. Several municipalities suggested flexible capital funding be provided for affordable housing and related upgrading.⁵⁷

The Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario and the CHFC proposed changes to legislation that would set inclusionary housing requirements for new housing developments. The Ontario Municipal Social Services Association asked the government to create financing and housing planning tools to provide Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services

⁵⁶ Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario, Hamilton Community Legal Clinic, Home of Their Own, Toronto York Region Labour Council, ACORN Canada, Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Good Shepherd Centres, Provincial Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee, Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, Legal Assistance of Windsor/Community Legal Aid, and Poverty Free Thunder Bay.

⁵⁷ Municipality of Brooke Alvinston, Regional Municipality of Peel, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, and The Corporation of the City of Windsor.

Administration Boards with adequate resources to assist with affordable housing targets in their communities. The community groups Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa and the Good Shepherd Centres recommended investment in community hubs in addition to affordable housing.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND FORESTRY

Conservation Ontario requested continued funding under various provincial programs including the Water Erosion and Control Infrastructure (WECI) program, the Green Investment Fund, and its own flood programs.

Forestry products companies EACOM Timber Corporation, Resolute Forest Products, and Domtar, along with the Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA), called for promotion of the forestry products industry. EACOM requested an allocation in the 2016 Budget for resource road funding, Resolute Forest Products recommended maintaining the current stumpage rate for hardwoods, and the OFIA requested the Province reduce the fixed portion of Crown dues to \$0.50 per cubic metre and update the residual value stumpage formula to be comparable with rates in other Canadian jurisdictions.

The Town of Atikokan, Resolute Forest Products, and the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce asked the Province to support access to reliable and affordable industrial fibre to maintain existing investments and attract new investments; concerns were expressed about impacts of the *Endangered Species Act* on the forestry sector.⁵⁸ The Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce and the Ontario Forest Industries Association lobbied for the permanent protection of at least 26 million cubic meters per year of sustainable industrial fibre.

The Union of Ontario Indians requested the commitment of financial resources to support action on the Forestry Framework Agreement Memorandum of Understanding. Ducks Unlimited Canada recommended that all investments of public funds in infrastructure result in a net gain of wetland area and the pursuit of legislative and policy initiatives to advance the conservation of wetlands and other natural green infrastructure. ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services) Canada asked for funding for its alternative land use services in addition to the funds the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry provides through its Species At Risk program.

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) requested base program funding to ensure that fish and wildlife programs are protected and increased to align with contributions from anglers, hunters, and trappers; they also sought investment in the promotion of fishing, hunting, and trapping in Ontario.

⁵⁸ Town of Atikokan, Ontario Forest Industries Association, and Resolute Forest Products.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AND MINES

The Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce (NOACC) indicated that energy infrastructure for mines should be built and paid for through a needs-analysis system and not be the responsibility of the user. The Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobbied for continued support for the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund.

Several witnesses proposed moving forward with the development of the Ring of Fire. The NOACC and the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce (TBCC) sought the investments in the transportation, energy, and technology infrastructure needed to get projects operating. More specifically, the Northern Ontario Services Deliverers Association and the City of Thunder Bay called for assistance for the Eagles Nest development in implementing the east-west road and transmission corridor. The Progressive Contractors Association of Canada asked that the Province ensure open competition for any Ring of Fire-related infrastructure projects.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario (CAHO) supported maintenance of the Ontario Research Fund and the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre asked that the regional innovation centres continue to be funded in the delivery of business support services. The City of Ottawa encouraged the Province to explore the concept of a smart city, which is about municipalities taking advantage of the “Internet of Things,” (the networking of physical objects connecting through the Internet).

TOURISM, CULTURE AND SPORT

The Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA) requested the provision of legislative or regulatory authority for the Destination Marketing Program in order to provide certainty for the industry and address visitor experience and consumer protection. Ottawa Tourism lobbied for the Destination Marketing fee to be regulated if the majority of the businesses support it. The Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) asked that the funding envelope for tourism marketing be maintained. The TIAO also asked the government to build and secure a strong tourism workforce while continuing to develop strategic partnerships. Jeff Butler and Heather Howard from Thousand Islands Duty Free Shop called for an aggressive and well-funded advertising campaign to inform US travelers of the benefits (such as a beneficial exchange rate) of visiting Ontario.

The Ontario Arts Foundation recommended renewing the Arts Endowment Fund and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra requested a provincial-federal-municipal partnership be established to create a world-class sound studio that would attract film industry investment. Representatives from Orchestras Canada and the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra Association called on the Province to increase funding to the Ontario Arts Council.

The Ontario Museum Association asked for funding of up to 50% of eligible community museum operating expenses. Parks and Recreation Ontario looked for an annual commitment for 10 years to a dedicated fund for community sport, recreation, parks, and trails infrastructure.

The City of Brampton requested provincial grants to help offset costs related to the 2016 Canada 55+ Games and to promote Brampton and Ontario's commitment to sport and seniors. The Province was asked to match funds raised by established programs within the Sistema Ontario Association.

The Ontario Federation of Labour and the Toronto and York Region Labour Council called for funding of a robust Anti-Racism Secretariat.

TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Among the recommendations relating to apprentices in Ontario, ApprenticeLMS asked the Province to support the information technology (IT) trades and ensure adequate seats are available for registered IT apprentices. The Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce suggested that the journeymen-to-apprenticeship ratios are too high in many trades; Essar Steel Algoma Inc. and the Progressive Contractors Association of Canada encouraged the government to continue the Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit.

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Association (OCUFA) voiced support for Bill 127, *Pathways to Post-secondary Excellence Act (Post-secondary Educational Report), 2015* and asked the government to establish a new higher education data agency mandated to collect, analyze, and disseminate key information on Ontario's universities. The Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance (OGSA) also supported Bill 127, adding that the bill—once passed into law—will allow students to make more informed choices regarding their postsecondary options.

Colleges Ontario requested an increase in the special needs allocation to help special-needs students make the transition from high school to college. They also recommended reforms to the eligibility criteria for the Ontario Tuition grant so that it reaches more students from low-income households. Colleges Ontario also sought a funding increase for repairs and upgrades, including a new fund for capital legacy projects at the colleges.

Sault College requested predictable funding to support at-risk students with disabilities, first generation, and Aboriginal students. Sault College also recommended that special needs funding should follow a student from secondary school to postsecondary institution, similar to the way money follows a patient in hospital funding.

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 613 urged the Province to address the issues that cause colleges to find funding sources through questionable contracts at home and abroad. The Canadian Federation of Students - Ontario (CFSO) asked that the Province create an Aboriginal Languages Education and Preservation Fund available to Ontario postsecondary

institutions. The CFSSO also advocated the elimination of tuition and education tax credits and the redirection of the funds into up-front needs-based grants.

The Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance (OGSA) brought several recommendations, including the provision of funding for sexual violence and harassment programs for graduate students and for bullying/harassment and mental health issues. The OGSA asked the government to re-introduce post-residence fees in Ontario by reducing tuition fees for all graduate students in the research, thesis or dissertation-writing portions of their degrees by 50%. The OGSA also asked the government to reintroduce the technology and textbook educational allowance: 25% back (one time grant or tax credit) up to a maximum of \$4,000 for eligible technology and textbook educational expenses.

The Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance recommended merging the Ontario Tuition Grant and Ontario Access Grant into a new discount program that provides more non-repayable aid to lower-income students and responds to personal tuition costs. Pathways to Education Canada, a non-profit organization, recommended that application fees to postsecondary education be discounted or waived for low-income families.

The Canadian Federation of Students - Ontario (CFSSO) asked the government to support paid experiential learning opportunities for college and university students in all fields of study through the development of a Supported Experiential Education Program.

The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation asked for enhanced support for postsecondary growth and development in Northern Ontario to align with institutional, municipal, and provincial priorities.

Various groups, including the Toronto and York Region Labour Council and the United Food Commercial Workers Canada, called for reduced tuition fees for college and university education. The Canadian Federation of Students - Ontario specifically asked for a 50% reduction in tuition fees for all students and programs.

Lakehead University requested funding to create the Gichi Kendaasiwin Centre for Aboriginal education. Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards/Invest Ottawa, along with Lakehead University, asked the Province to support research and innovation with the private sector to diversify and support the local economy. The Council of Ontario Universities recommended increasing the number of Ontario Graduate Scholarships and the value of each award, which has not been done since 2001.

The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Association (OCUFA) asked the Province to increase per-student public investment in Ontario's universities and align to the Canadian average by 2020-2021. OCUFA also urged the Province to align Ontario's student-faculty ratio with the Canadian average by 2020-2021 by hiring 8,510 new full-time faculty members.

The City of Brampton asked that the second call for proposals for a postsecondary facility to serve the Peel and Halton regions be issued this spring

and details provided about how postsecondary institutions partnered with municipalities can bid.

Ryerson University requested a one-time capital support for incubators and zones that offer enhanced experiential learning opportunities for student entrepreneurs. Ryerson also asked the government to provide funding for a Ryerson Career Centre pilot project designed to help students gain experience in their fields through high-quality paid work.

TRANSPORTATION

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation recommended the end of plans to impose double taxation for infrastructure in the form of a high-occupancy vehicle toll.

The Regional Municipality of Peel and the City of Thunder Bay sought long-term predictable and sustainable funding for transportation infrastructure. The Region of Peel asked for investment in the 400-series highways and for the completion of the environmental assessment and commitment of funds for the GTA west corridor. Jane Anne McIntyre, on behalf of Friends of the Andrewsville Bridge, requested funds be provided to repair the causeway portion of the bridge system that is in Grenville County.

The Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce called on the government to develop a long-term fully funded plan for highway investment that addresses the constant closures of the Trans-Canada Highway and ensures that alternate routes are available to keep goods and services moving. The Corporation of the City of Timmins recommended enhancing the northern transportation network and increasing the Connecting Links Funding envelope in future budgetary years.

The Greater Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce, along with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, recommended establishing a 10-year capital allocation in the Budget and a 10-year capital plan for rail infrastructure with the Government of Canada to support two-way, all-day GO Train service on the Kitchener Line (CN North Mainline). The Railway Association of Canada requested funds for rail infrastructure investments.

Representatives from TTCriders, an organization of public transit users in Toronto, recommended the Province provide half the operating subsidy of the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC). TTCriders also emphasized that current and new transit should remain publicly owned and operated.

The City of London requested \$388 million for the London Rapid Transit project. The Hamilton-Halton Home Builders' Association asked for continued investment in local Hamilton infrastructure, specifically LRT and GO projects.

The Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) recommended making adequate funding streams available for prospective truck driver trainees.

TREASURY BOARD

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) recommended the Province continue to pursue program review, renewal, and transformation, and introduce means-testing in the provision of services. The OCC also asked the government to work with the federal government to restructure programs that are a net drain on Ontario's finances. The OCC estimates this net drain or structural gap (the difference between what Ontarians pay to the federal government and what they receive back) to be between \$9.1 and \$12.5 billion.

The Canadian Taxpayers Federation suggested changes to the public appointment process. The Federation also asked the government to restore the Auditor General's discretionary authority in determining what is partisan in government advertising.

LIST OF WITNESSES AND WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Presenter	Date of Appearance / Written Submission
Ackerman, Jerry	Written
ACORN Canada	February 1, 2016
Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario	Written
Advocis, The Financial Advisors Association of Canada	January 22, 2016
Air Transport Association of Canada	January 22, 2016
Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa	January 22, 2016
Alterna Savings and Credit Union Ltd	January 22, 2016
ALUS Canada	January 18, 2016
Alzheimer Society of Ontario	February 2, 2016
Analytica Advisors	Written
Anishinabek Police Service	January 21, 2016
ApprenticeLMS Limited	January 18, 2016
Association for Early Childhood Educators Ontario	Written
Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario	January 20, 2016
Association of Municipalities of Ontario	January 19, 2016
Association of Ontario Health Centres	Written
Association of Victims for Accident Insurance Reform	Written
Autism Services Waterloo Region	January 18, 2016
Beth Donovan Hospice	January 22, 2016
Bioindustrial Innovation Canada	January 18, 2016
Botari, Carolyn	Written
CAAT Pension Plan	February 2, 2016
Caledon Area Families For Inclusion	Written
Cameron, Kathleen	January 21, 2016
Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits	January 18, 2016
Canadian Association of Physician Assistants	Written
Canadian Beverage Association	February 2, 2016
Canadian Cancer Society	Written
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives	February 1, 2016
Canadian Diabetes Association	Written
Canadian Environmental Law Association	Written

Presenter	Date of Appearance / Written Submission
Canadian Federation of Students - Ontario	February 1, 2016
Canadian Fuels Association	Written
Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Ontario	February 2, 2016
Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex County Branch	January 19, 2016
Canadian Mental Health Association, York Region and South Simcoe Branch	Written
Canadian Taxpayers Federation	February 1, 2016
Card, Cheryl	Written
Carpenter Hospice	January 18, 2016
Cement Association of Canada	January 22, 2016
Central 1 Credit Union	February 2, 2016
Centre for Research and Innovation in the Bio-Economy	January 20, 2016
Champlain Region Family Council Network	January 22, 2016
Chatham-Kent Health Coalition, Sarnia-Lambton Health Coalition	January 19, 2016
Chemistry Industry Association of Canada	January 22, 2016
Chiefs of Ontario	February 2, 2016
Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Roger's House	January 22, 2016
Children's Mental Health Ontario	Written
Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation	January 19, 2016
Christian Labour Association of Canada	January 18, 2016
City of Brampton	February 2, 2016
City of London	January 18, 2016
City of Ottawa	January 22, 2016
City of Thunder Bay	January 20, 2016
Clark, Dell	Written
Clark, Steve, MPP	Written
Class 1 Inc.	Written
Colleges Ontario	February 1, 2016
Comfort, Joan	Written
Community Commonwealth - Max Moore	Written
Community Living Ontario	Written
Community Living Toronto	Written
Congress of Union Retirees of Canada: Hamilton, Burlington, and Oakville Chapter	Written
Conservation Ontario	February 1, 2016

Presenter	Date of Appearance / Written Submission
Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, Ontario Region	February 1, 2016
Cornwall and District Labour Council	January 22, 2016
Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario	January 18, 2016
Council of Ontario Universities	Written
CUPE Ontario	February 2, 2016
Dale, Margo	January 21, 2016
Dale, Rickey	Written
DeafBlind Ontario Services	Written
DellaVedova, Marie	Written
Domtar	January 21, 2016
Ducks Unlimited Canada	February 2, 2016
Dunne, Alan	Written
Durham Region Stroke Recovery Group	Written
EACOM Timber Corporation	January 22, 2016
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario	February 2, 2016
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Thames Valley Teacher Local	January 19, 2016
Enbridge Gas Distribution	February 2, 2016
Environmental Defence	February 2, 2016
Essar Steel Algoma Inc.	January 21, 2016
Essex County Health Coalition	January 19, 2016
Family Services Windsor-Essex Family Service Ontario	January 19, 2016
Fertilizer Canada	Written
FirstOntario Credit Union	January 18, 2016
Fisher, Charles	Written
Fix Our Schools	February 2, 2016
Futurpreneur Canada	January 18, 2016
Glenwood United Church/Pregnancy and Infant Loss Network	January 19, 2016
Good Shepherd Centres	January 18, 2016
Greater Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce	January 19, 2016
Greenwood-Spears, Judy	Written
Gulyas, Erno	January 21, 2016
Hamilton and District Labour Council	January 18, 2016
Hamilton Community Legal Clinic	January 18, 2016

Presenter	Date of Appearance / Written Submission
Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction	January 18, 2016
Hamilton-Halton Home Builders' Association	January 18, 2016
Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan	February 2, 2016
Heart and Stroke Foundation	Written
Home Care Ontario	January 18, 2016
Home of Their Own	January 18, 2016
Hospice Care Ottawa	January 22, 2016
Hospice Palliative Care Ontario – Marg Poling	January 20, 2016
Hospice Palliative Care Ontario Algoma Residential Community Hospice	January 21, 2016
Hull, Russell	January 20, 2016
Imperial Tobacco Canada	Written
Income Security Advocacy Centre	Written
Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards/Invest Ottawa	January 22, 2016
Insurance Bureau of Canada	February 1, 2016
Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition	January 22, 2016
International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers	Written
Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada	February 1, 2016
John Howard Society of Ontario	Written
Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre	January 18, 2016
Koala Place Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (Cornwall)	Written
Lakehead University	January 20, 2016
Lamour, Brian	Written
Legal Assistance of Windsor/Community Legal Aid	January 19, 2016
Lopez, Daniela and Diaz, Javier	Written
Mamaweswen North Shore Tribal Council	January 21, 2016
Manley, Gerald H.	Written
Maternal Child Program, Sault Area Hospital	January 21, 2016
Metabolic Syndrome Canada	Written
Montgomery, Joseph	Written
Motor City Community Credit Union	January 19, 2016
Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada	Written
Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston	January 19, 2016
Nafziger, Bill	Written

Presenter	Date of Appearance / Written Submission
Nagy, Timea	January 18, 2016
National Airlines Council of Canada	Written
National Citizens Coalition	Written
National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco	January 22, 2016
Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada	Written
Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund	Written
Nitefor, Michael	Written
Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services	January 21, 2016
Northern Ontario Services Deliverers Association	Written
Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce	January 20, 2016
Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association	January 20, 2016
Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario	February 2, 2016
ODSP Action Coalition	February 2, 2016
Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition	Written
Ontario Arts Foundation	Written
Ontario Association of Architects	Written
Ontario Association of Cardiologists	February 1, 2016
Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies	Written
Ontario Association of Children's Rehabilitation Services	January 19, 2016
Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres	Written
Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors	Written
Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth	Written
Ontario Association of Social Workers	Written
Ontario Bioscience Innovation Organization	Written
Ontario Caregiver Coalition	Written
Ontario Chamber of Commerce	February 1, 2016
Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care	February 1, 2016
Ontario Community Support Association	Written
Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations	February 1, 2016
Ontario Convenience Stores Association	February 2, 2016
Ontario Council of Hospital Unions	January 21, 2016
Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women	Written
Ontario Dental Association	January 20, 2016

Presenter	Date of Appearance / Written Submission
Ontario Energy Association	Written
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association	Written
Ontario Federation of Agriculture	February 1, 2016
Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters	Written
Ontario Federation of Labour	February 2, 2016
Ontario Forest Industries Association	January 20, 2016
Ontario Graduate Students' Alliance	January 18, 2016
Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers	January 19, 2016
Ontario Health Coalition	February 1, 2016
Ontario Home Builders' Association	Written
Ontario Hospital Association	February 1, 2016
Ontario Kinesiology Association	Written
Ontario Korean Businessmen's Association	February 2, 2016
Ontario Long Term Care Association	February 1, 2016
Ontario Lung Association	Written
Ontario Medical Association	January 20, 2016
Ontario Medical Association – Dr. Albert Ng	January 19, 2016
Ontario Municipal Social Services Association	Written
Ontario Museum Association	Written
Ontario Nurses' Association	February 1, 2016
Ontario Pharmacists Association	February 2, 2016
Ontario Public Health Association	Written
Ontario Public Service Employees Union	February 1, 2016
Ontario Public Service Employees Union – Gord Longhi	January 20, 2016
Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Local 613	January 21, 2016
Ontario Real Estate Association	February 2, 2016
Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association	February 2, 2016
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation	February 1, 2016
Ontario Society of Professional Engineers	Written
Ontario Trial Lawyers Association	February 2, 2016
Ontario Trucking Association	Written
Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance	Written
Ontario Waterpower Association	Written

Presenter	Date of Appearance / Written Submission
OPSEU - Adult Corrections	January 18, 2016
OPSEU - Jeff Arbus	January 21, 2016
OPSEU Corrections Division	January 19, 2016
OPSEU Hospital Professionals Division	Written
OPSEU Hospital Support Division	Written
OPTrust	February 1, 2016
Orchestras Canada	Written
Organic Council of Ontario	Written
Ottawa and District Labour Council	January 22, 2016
Ottawa Centre EcoDistrict	January 22, 2016
Ottawa Chamber of Commerce Environment and Sustainability Committee	January 22, 2016
Ottawa Health Coalition	January 22, 2016
Ottawa Tourism	January 22, 2016
Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre	January 22, 2016
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board	Written
Parkinson Canada	Written
Parks and Recreation Ontario	Written
Pathways to Education Canada	Written
Pellier, Peter	Written
Pfizer Canada Inc.	Written
Police Association of Ontario	January 22, 2016
Poverty Free Thunder Bay	January 20, 2016
Pregnancy and Infant Loss Network - Shannon Bedard	January 21, 2016
Pregnancy and Infant Loss Network - Wendy Mouldsdale	January 18, 2016
Probation Officers Association of Ontario	January 22, 2016
Progressive Contractors Association of Canada	Written
Provincial Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee	Written
Provincial Network on Developmental Services	Written
Radwanski, Dominique	Written
Railway Association of Canada	Written
Region of Peel - Frank Dale, David Szwarc	January 18, 2016
Regional Municipality of Waterloo	Written
Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario	February 1, 2016

Presenter	Date of Appearance / Written Submission
Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario - Aric Rankin	January 18, 2016
Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario - Wendy Pearson	January 22, 2016
Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario - Windsor-Essex Chapter	January 19, 2016
Resolute Forest Products	January 20, 2016
Retail Council of Canada	February 2, 2016
Rural Ontario Municipal Association	Written
Ryerson University	Written
Sault and Area Health Coalition	January 21, 2016
Sault Area Hospital	January 21, 2016
Sault College	January 21, 2016
Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce	January 21, 2016
Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation	January 21, 2016
Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre	January 21, 2016
Schmidt, Jordon	Written
Serpent River First Nation	January 21, 2016
Sistema Ontario Association	Written
Social Action Committee, Ontario Association of Social Workers, Hamilton Branch	January 18, 2016
Somerset West Community Health Centre	Written
Spinal Cord Injury Ontario	Written
Spirits Canada/Association of Canadian Distillers	January 19, 2016
Sun County Lyme Awareness Support Group	January 19, 2016
Sweeney, Christine	January 19, 2016
Tam, Dr. Larissa and Yeung, Dr. Elaine	Written
The Corporation of the City of Timmins	Written
The Corporation of the City of Windsor	January 19, 2016
The Hospice of Windsor and Essex County Inc.	January 19, 2016
Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce	January 20, 2016
Thunder Bay Counselling Centre	January 20, 2016
Thunder Bay Health Coalition	January 20, 2016
Thunder Bay Home Builders' Association	January 20, 2016
Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre	January 20, 2016
Thunder Bay Regional Research Institute	January 20, 2016
Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra Association	January 20, 2016

Presenter	Date of Appearance / Written Submission
Toronto and York Region Labour Council	February 1, 2016
Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas	Written
Toronto Atmospheric Fund	February 2, 2016
Toronto Symphony Orchestra	Written
Tourism Industry Association of Ontario	Written
Town of Atikokan	January 20, 2016
Town of Marathon	Written
Town of Pelham	January 18, 2016
Trillium Automobile Dealers Association	February 1, 2016
TTCriders	February 2, 2016
Unifor	February 1, 2016
Unifor Local 299	January 20, 2016
Union Gas	February 1, 2016
Union of Ontario Indians	January 21, 2016
United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	Written
United Food Commercial Workers Canada	February 2, 2016
Victorian Order of Nurses Canada Ontario Community Support Association	January 22, 2016
Webber, Daryl	Written
West Ottawa Board of Trade	January 22, 2016
Whalen, Bernice	Written
Wilson, Barb	Written
Windsor and District Labour Council/Pathway to Potential	January 19, 2016
Windsor-Essex Health Coalition	January 19, 2016
Windsor-Essex Home Builders' Association	January 19, 2016
Windsor Regional Hospital	January 19, 2016
Wine Council of Ontario	February 1, 2016
Winery and Grower Alliance of Ontario	February 1, 2016

**APPENDIX A – DISSENTING OPINION OF THE PROGRESSIVE
CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Introduction

The Ontario Progressive Conservative members of the committee accept the facts of the pre-budget report, but reject the title and premise that this report from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs is a pre-budget report. The budget bill was tabled in the Legislature on Thursday, February 25, 2016, which was several weeks before this supposed pre-budget report was completed.

The government has displayed a complete lack of respect by approving a report of suggestions gathered from what was supposed to be meaningful consultation and calling it a pre-budget report when the budget had already been tabled in the Legislature. It is disrespectful to the democratic committee process that the government should promote and hold in high regard.

Themes

It is clear in the report that not one senior citizen or group presented before the committee asked to pay more for their prescription drugs. The committee did not see any parents of young and active children come to the hearings and condemn their tax credits. The committee did not hear a single person ask the government to increase the province's debt. No presenter asked that Ontario remain the most indebted subsovereign government in the world. The PC members of the committee would like to make it clear that none of the aforementioned was heard by the committee.

Healthcare

In each and every city, the committee heard from health care workers and patients. They heard what effect this government's cuts will have on patient care. The committee heard from hundreds of people around the table that also showed up to participate in a demonstration outside of Queen's Park asking that health care cuts stop. We heard of bed cuts, service cuts, downsizing and consolidations – all within a climate of rising costs for electricity, drugs, medical supplies and employee compensation.

The committee heard from the Windsor Regional Hospital, and we heard from many hospital workers at the demonstration. Our members heard that to cope with a \$20-million budget shortfall, Windsor Regional Hospital is eliminating 86 full-time jobs throughout the hospital's two campuses. They are firing 80 registered nurses and in total, 120 nursing jobs are being eliminated. Because of this government's policies, the hospital's CEO said electricity will cost an extra \$700,000 in 2016.

The committee heard that the government's policies are having profound consequences on patients and surgeries are being cancelled.

The Ontario Health Coalition shared heart wrenching stories of the consequences stemming from patients being prematurely discharged. One particular story shared was especially notable, “She was so weak that she was unable to knock at her door and wake up her husband to let her in the house. She collapsed on the front steps of her house and she waited until morning when her husband found her when he went out, ironically, to go to the hospital to see her. This is not the only case in which we hear of hospital patients discharged so frail that they cannot get up the front stairs to their own houses.”

The PC members of the committee fear the government will continue to attack health care to balance their budget despite all of the presentations before the committee.

Corrections

The committee heard the Mayor of Thunder Bay describe the state of the Thunder Bay district jail, he claimed “that jail is a rathole, and I can’t put it any other way.” His direct comment was indicative of the greater narrative that the committee heard throughout public hearings. The notion that “there is a crisis in corrections” was common throughout. The committee heard that there are jails where “toilets don’t flush. Sinks have no running water” and that “toilets regularly back up and overflow down into our kitchen area.” There was evidence of neglect to our corrections system from this government.

Conclusion

The Ontario PC members of the committee conclude that this report should not be considered a pre-budget report, and in fact should be titled a post-budget report. Having the government introduce the budget weeks in advance of the report being finalized is disrespectful to each and every presenter that came before this committee to offer their insights that are captured in this report. Public consultations, when valued, serve to strengthen public policy. We have concluded that perhaps this government is so arrogant that they think they do not need help from the people of Ontario. By not listening to its citizens, this government has arrived at a \$308 billion debt, a broken health care system, and billion dollar scandal after billion dollar scandal. The Ontario PC committee members hope the government listens and embraces all future public hearings on all committees.

Thank you

The Ontario PC members would like to thank every individual and every organization that took their time to offer a meaningful and important presentation to the committee members of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

We would also like to thank the PC members of this committee, finance critic MPP Fedeli, and MPP Barrett, for their dedicated work and for travelling with this committee. We would like to thank MPP Clark, MPP MacLeod, MPP MacLaren, MPP Walker, MPP Munro and MPP Martow for their attendance and participation in the committee to listen to presenters from across the province.

**APPENDIX B – DISSENTING OPINION OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY
MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE**

Preamble

The Liberal government's 2016 Ontario Budget was tabled before the completion of the report to which this dissenting opinion is appended, the Pre-Budget Consultation Report of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

The Minister of Finance himself engaged in debate with members of the Committee about the issue of the early tabling of the 2016 Budget when he appeared before the Committee on February 2nd, 2016.

The dissenting opinion of the Ontario NDP Caucus Member on the Committee stems from the Minister of Finance's comments at that meeting of the Committee, which complies with Standing Order 131. (c) of the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which permits Members to dissent from a "particular recommendation or comment".

The purpose of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs Pre-Budget Consultation process is to consult with the public about the state of Ontario's finances and its economic policy as the Minister prepares the annual budget. According to Standing Order 108. (e), the Committee is "empowered to consider and report to the House its observations, opinions and recommendations on the fiscal and economic policies of the Province."

Given the unusual occurrence of the provincial Budget being delivered to Members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario before the completion of the work of the Committee on the Pre-Budget Consultation Report, the reasons for this dissenting opinion will refer to both the aforementioned unusual occurrence and the comments in the report that would have provided suggestions to the Minister of where the government should make further investments in public services, particularly with respect to health care, education and social services in this year's Budget.

As a consequence of the decision made by the current Liberal government of Ontario and, in particular, the present Minister of Finance, to table its 2016 Budget without considering this Committee's Report on Pre-Budget Consultations, the 2016 Ontario Budget necessarily avoids considering the voices of Ontarians who made presentations to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs for these Pre-Budget Consultations, and can therefore only be described as a failed process.

For reasons known only to the Minister, this government chose not to inform the Committee of the precise date of the Budget's introduction – even though it was tabled while this Committee was meeting to write this report. The Members of this Committee were put in the disappointing position of having to complete a report that would inform the Minister during a process which both the Minister and the Members of the Committee knew had already ended. We are left with no choice but to call the Minister's decision reckless and unnecessarily jeopardizing of a Committee process which was – and is – designed to open up the Budget to the voices of Ontarians who were not previously able to comment before was it tabled. Ontarians have a reasonable expectation that their government will listen

to their priorities for the Budget, and because that expectation was not met this year, the 2016 Budget process is a failure by this government to adequately consult Ontarians.

The committee travelled to Hamilton, Windsor, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Ottawa and Toronto for seven days of public hearings. The committee heard from 146 witnesses and received hundreds of written submissions.

Not one of the comments made by members of the public at those meetings, included in this report, could be included in Ontario's 2016 Budget.

Ontario's New Democratic Caucus Members on the Committee are disappointed that the Liberal government chose to ignore the voices of Ontarians in their 2016 Budget process.

2016 Budget: Recommendations and Supporting Arguments

Last year, the 2015 Ontario Budget continued a trend by the Liberal government of cutting public services, which have had a devastating impact on the quality of health care, education, and other social programs that Ontarians rely on.

In 2014, the Liberal government introduced a Budget that it insisted was "the most progressive budget in decades." However, it has turned out that that was only the first step in a series of deep and wide-ranging cuts to public services.

That trend continues this year.

Had the Minister waited for the completion of this Pre-Budget Consultation Report, he would have been able to consider that "the Committee heard many calls ... about the sustainability of a continued underfunding of public services." If that information been considered, the Liberal government's plans to continue to cut public spending - while claiming no cuts to public services are happening - would have been reconsidered.

It would not have been possible to cut nearly \$1.5 billion in public service funding - bringing the total number of cuts since 2014 to over \$5 billion to all Ministries - because Ontarians would have informed the Minister that the need to invest in public services is too great. The witnesses who appeared before the Committee to call on the government to stop the cuts and to provide adequate funding for health care, education and social assistance might have convinced the Minister of the need to pursue a different course, if he did not table the 2016 Budget before the work of this Committee on Pre-Budget Consultations was completed.

It continues to be deeply troubling to Ontario's New Democratic Caucus Members on the Committee that Premier Kathleen Wynne and her government cannot even get the basics right.

Ontarians expect their government to deliver high-quality universally accessible health care, world class system of public education, and cost-effective and reliable electricity

In spite of many calls from people who presented to this Committee to address the underfunding of public services, the government's plans to nearly double the cost of prescription drugs for most seniors will continue to hurt Ontarians. This is not acceptable. The plan blindsided Ontario's seniors, many of whom cannot afford increases to their costs of living.

After four years of freezes to hospital budgets, hospitals will be forced to cut their budgets for another year. During the Pre-Budget Consultations, the committee heard from representatives of hospitals in Ontario who are facing skyrocketing energy bills with shrinking budgets. Nurses told the committee about the impact of the Liberal government's cuts are having on providing frontline care.

Cuts to public health care cannot continue and yet, in 2016, the Ontario Liberal government continues to cut health care spending.

Can Ontario's schools afford a further \$430 million in cuts to the Ministry of Education? Since that would bring the total amount of cuts to Ontario's students and schools to over \$1 billion, and the delegations before the Pre-Budget Tour spoke about the need to invest in public education, the answer is unequivocal: no.

Many of our public schools are in dire need of renovations to keep their doors open. Instead, this Liberal government is looking at closing schools, including five provincial schools for our most vulnerable students.

Ontarians expect better from their government.

The cost of electricity continues to rise in Ontario and yet this year the Ontario Liberal government is not going to stop the sell-off of Hydro One. This sale will result in a loss of revenue for the province of a projected \$500 million annually, according to the Financial Accountability Officer's report on the sale of Hydro One. That revenue should be used to invest in public services. However, that is not a priority for this Liberal government.

Unfortunately, there is no better example of this government's unwillingness to listen to the voices of Ontarians than the fact that 80% of Ontarians oppose the sale of Hydro One.

Last year, the government revised the same projection downward by 67,000 jobs. This year, the Ontario Liberal government will continue the trend of revising its job projections downward by a further 60,000.

Ontarians know that their government needs to have a strong plan to create the kinds of good jobs that they can raise a family on. We have no indication that the government has such a plan.

In fact, the 2015 Auditor-General's report criticized how this government has done Economic Development – without proper oversight, transparency or follow-up on whether the government's investments have yielded the promised number of jobs. Had the government waited for the Pre-Budget Consultation Report to be

completed, they would not be silent on a better plan to create good jobs in Ontario.

Finally, Ontarians need access to affordable, quality childcare. Right now, there aren't enough spaces available to meet demand and the Liberal government remains silent on childcare.

Conclusion

This year, Kathleen Wynne's Ontario Liberal government has the opportunity with its 2016 Budget stop cuts to health care, to reinvest in education, to end the sell-off of Hydro One, to create good jobs and to protect and invest in our public services, and may have in fact made those policy decisions if they had waited for this Committee's report.