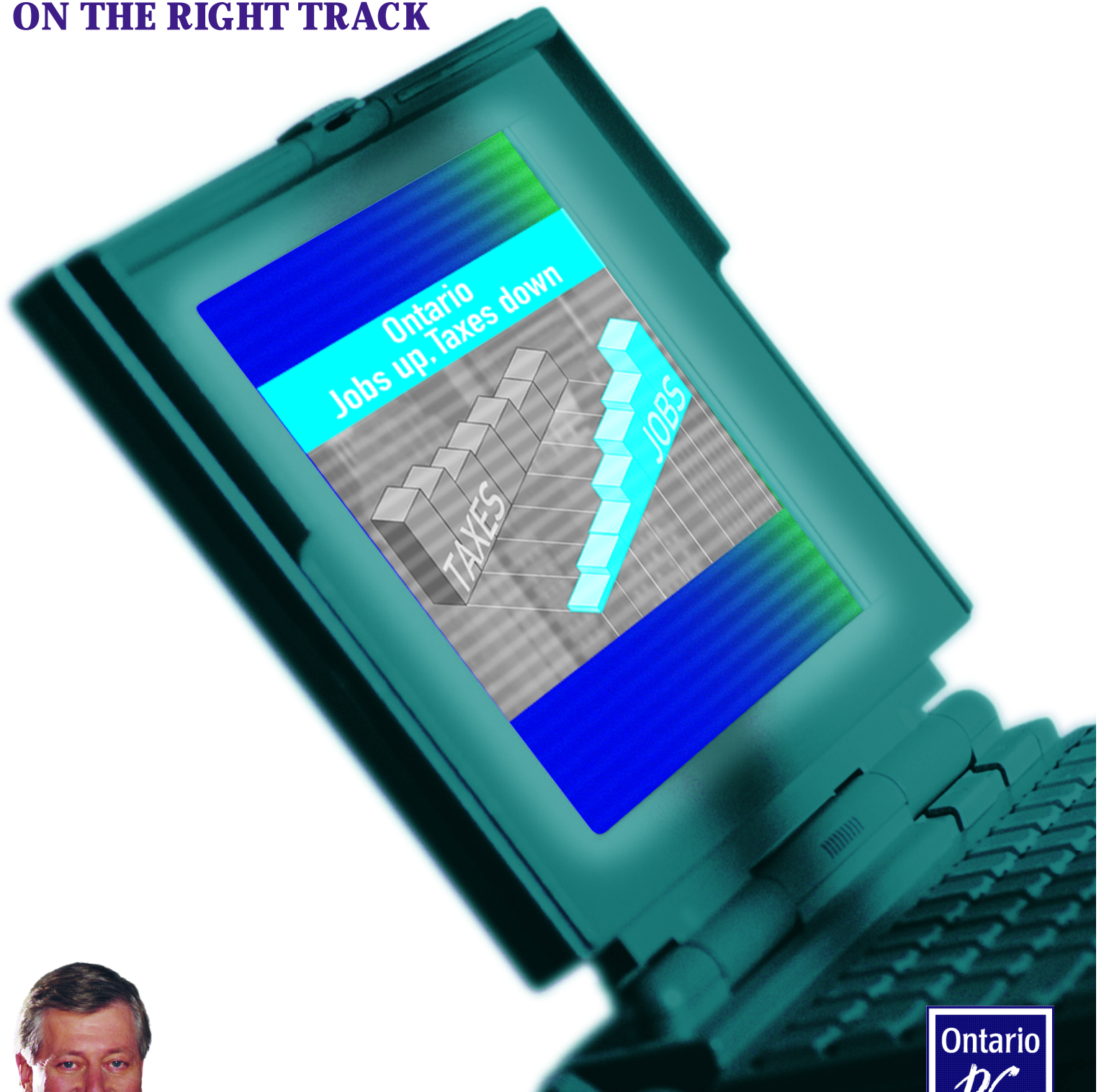


# Blueprint

**MIKE HARRIS' PLAN TO KEEP ONTARIO  
ON THE RIGHT TRACK**



**Strong Leadership for a Strong Ontario.**



# ***Blueprint***

## *Mike Harris' Plan to Keep Ontario on the Right Track*

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# Blueprint

## *Mike Harris' Plan to Keep Ontario on the Right Track*

As we look ahead to the year 2000, Ontario's promise is unlimited. This province and its people can aim for the top in those things that matter most to all of us:

- A healthier, safer, cleaner province
- Lower taxes to create more and better jobs, particularly for our young people
- Stronger skills and better futures for our children through quality education
- A framework of roads, schools, hospitals and technology links for today and tomorrow, and
- Government which is leaner, more sensible, more efficient and genuinely concerned about serving you.

This is all possible, but will take strong, focussed leadership. It won't come easily, but it can be done, and it will be worth it.

Four years ago, my team and I were proud to take office with a plan to get Ontario back on track.

While many people doubted we could do it, and some fought against us, still more agreed that it was time to turn Ontario around. That meant making tough, deliberate choices to achieve our goals. As Premier, I've learned that leadership is about creating a clear vision of what needs to be done, setting priorities, then doing what it takes to reach our goals.

Ontario's turnaround in the past four years didn't happen by accident. Thanks to your hard work and some key decisions, we were able to get rid of the roadblocks that held us back:

- As promised, we cut the provincial income tax rate by 30% and put \$1,385 per year back in the pockets of a typical Ontario family (two earner couple with two children and income of \$60,000 per year).
- We tackled the skyrocketing \$11.3 billion deficit and we're now on track to balancing the budget in 2000, right on schedule.
- We not only kept our word on health care; we made the tough decisions others wouldn't to put the system back on firm ground. We increased health care funding by \$1.5 billion and put every penny we found in waste and duplication back into patient services.
- We scrapped job-killing payroll taxes, unfair hiring quotas and unbalanced labour legislation. Since 1995, Ontario has seen the biggest job increase on record, with more than 540,000 new jobs. That means we're ahead of schedule in our five-year plan for 725,000 jobs!
- We overhauled a welfare system that clearly wasn't working by getting able-bodied recipients to earn part of their benefits and by bringing in work-for-welfare. Today, there are nearly 400,000 fewer people trapped in a cycle of welfare dependency.

- We put the emphasis back on teaching in our classrooms, and increased aid for post-secondary students. Now, more resources are spent on classroom education and we have more students in post-secondary education than ever before.

Common sense. Solid progress. A strong foundation.

But creating a better province with more jobs and a better quality of life is not a sprint or even a marathon - it is a never-ending challenge, one that requires strong leadership and a clear vision. We live in a highly competitive, complex, and fast changing world. We either keep moving forward or risk sliding back and losing our ability to support vital programs such as health care.

After all the progress we've made together, we can't risk it all by returning to the old style of politics that left Ontario in such a mess four years ago.

We believe Ontario should continue to move forward to better times, not slide backward to high debts, high unemployment, runaway spending and low expectations. Today in Ontario, we can look to the future with hope and confidence. Let's not lose that.

That's why we believe in this plan - the Blueprint for Ontario.

In Blueprint you'll find a balanced, straightforward, no-nonsense plan for our future. The foundation for this plan is a strong, growing economy. With economic growth, more people are working, providing for themselves and their families. It also gives us, as a society, the resources we need to support a better quality of life - higher quality education in the classroom, more secure communities, dependable and sustainable health care.

This is why we focus so clearly in Blueprint on keeping our economy competitive, growing and strong. Ontario needs a realistic plan for reaching our potential, and proven, experienced leadership to make that plan work.

This is our plan. I hope you will take the time to read it, consider the options, discuss it with your family, and compare our plan with those of the other parties. In the end, it's up to you to make the decision to keep Ontario on the right track to a better future.

Mike Harris



April, 1999



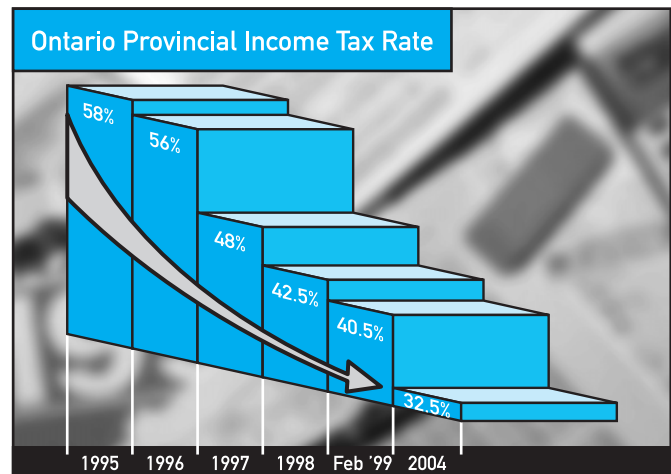
# Blueprint

## Mike Harris' Plan to Keep Ontario on the Right Track

*Here is our balanced plan for strengthening our economy, creating more jobs and making Ontario a better place in which to live:*

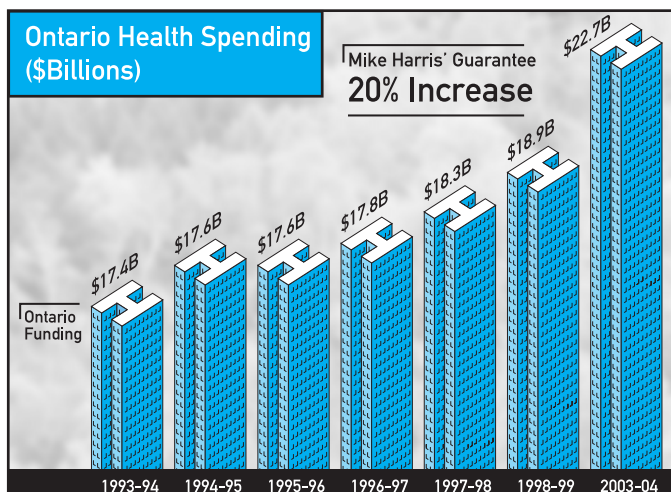
### 1. A 20% Tax Cut

The debate is over — **tax cuts create jobs**. Ontario has led the way and others are now following Mike Harris' common sense leadership by cutting taxes to boost their economies. Now, we're going to cut taxes again, putting even more money back in the pockets of hard-working people and stimulating even more job creation. We'll **cut both the provincial income tax rate AND the provincial portion of residential property taxes by 20%**. Landlords will be required to pass their savings on to tenants.



### 2. A Guaranteed 20% Increase in Health Care Funding

We've already **increased health care spending by \$1.5 billion to its highest level in Ontario history**, despite huge cuts in federal funding. It took some tough, politically risky action, but we've done what had to be done to modernize the system and refocus spending on front-line care. Now, we are building a health care system for the future by **increasing health care funding by a guaranteed 20% over the next five years** to meet the needs of our aging population and the rising costs of medicine. We'll also introduce a **Patient's Bill of Rights** to guarantee you and your family the quality services you need, when you need them.



### 3. Guaranteed Funding and Higher Quality in Education

We believe our classrooms should be the focus of our resources, and so we will **guarantee that classroom funding will continue to increase to match rising enrollment.**

Our education system must be directly linked to the real world - to the jobs, ideas and challenges we face every day. We'll create **higher education standards** by testing our teachers as well as our students . . . **open the doors to advanced education** with more financial assistance for students . . . and start early with **effective programs for young children** on the first rung of the learning ladder.

### 4. Building for the Future

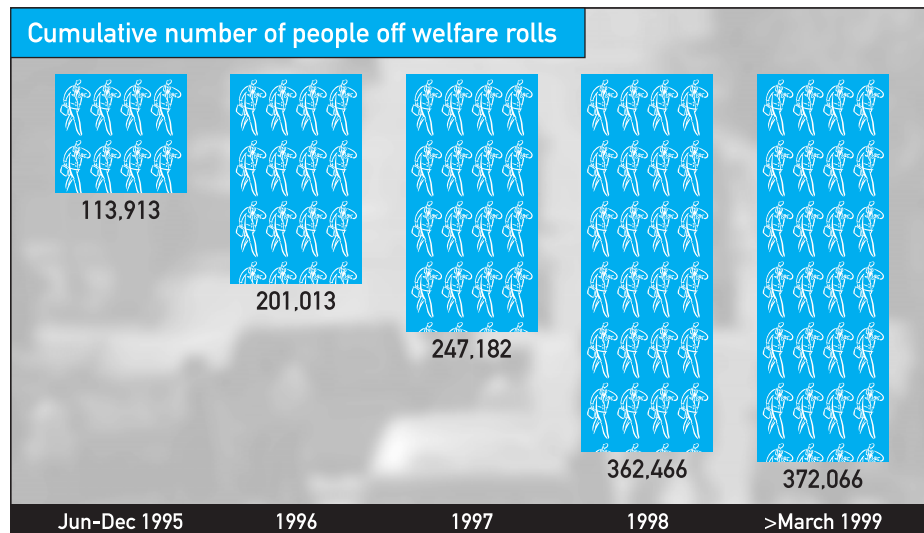
Ontario needs an infrastructure designed to meet our requirements today and in the future. Ontario prospers when our leaders take concrete steps to prepare for the future. Our strongest premiers consistently built frameworks big enough for us to grow into. We'll establish a **\$20 billion public/private SuperBuild Growth Fund** to renew Ontario's network of hospitals, high tech links, highways, schools, universities and colleges. We'll spend that money smarter, more strategically and more creatively to get our infrastructure up to today's standards and ready to meet tomorrow's needs.



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*for a* **STRONG ONTARIO**

## 5. A Hand Up, Not a Hand-Out

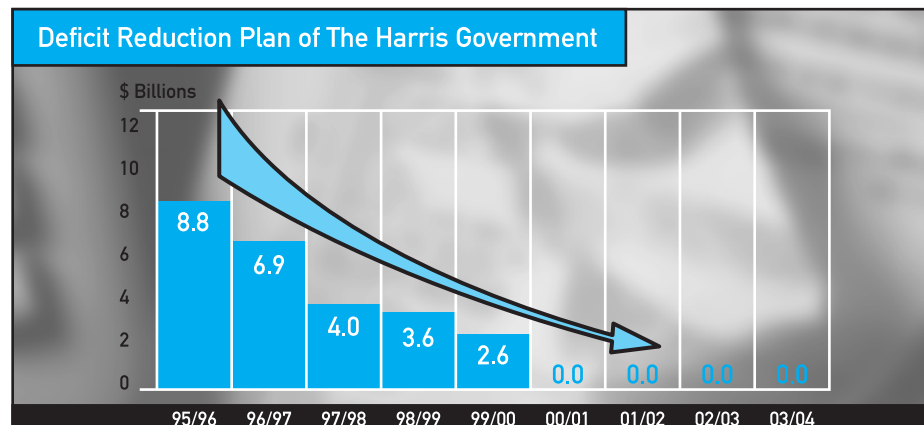
Our welfare reforms, including work-for-welfare, have helped nearly 400,000 people break the cycle of welfare dependency. That's a solid start. Now, we'll make even more progress by **re-focussing the welfare system** from one that hands out cheques to one that gets people's lives back on track. We'll **tear down the barriers to employment** for recipients, such as drug addiction and illiteracy, and expand workfare to get more recipients earning and learning their way to new jobs.



Source: Ontario Ministry of Community & Social Services

## 6. An End to Red Ink and Waste

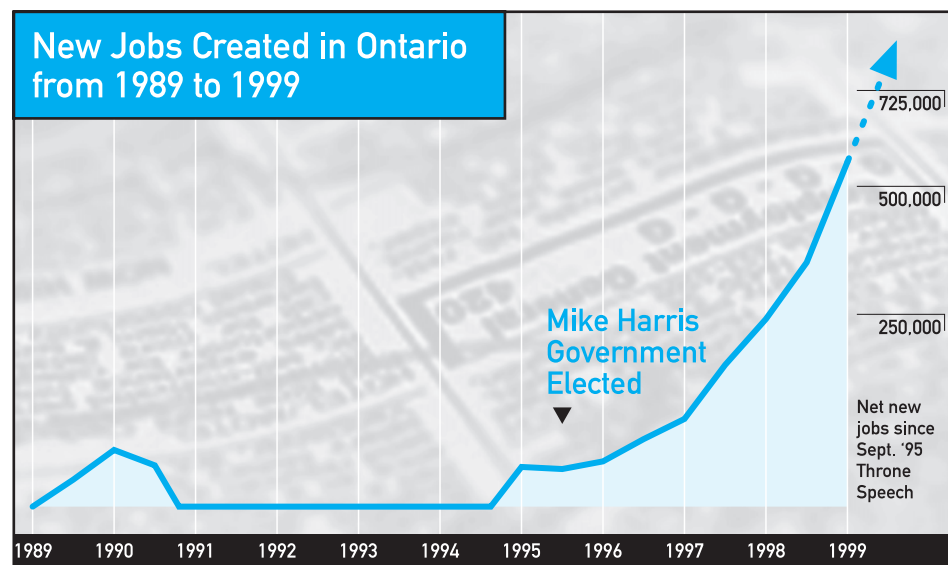
Once the budget is balanced - as promised and on schedule - **we'll start paying down the provincial debt**, with a total debt reduction of at least \$2 billion over our next term in office. Our long-term goal is to reduce Ontario's debt-to-GDP ratio from 30% to 25% over our next term and down to 10% within 20 years.



We've made great strides in protecting taxpayers' hard-earned dollars by eliminating waste, duplication and fraud in spending. We'll continue to wipe out wasteful spending wherever we find it. Our plan includes **a commitment to save taxpayers one cent of every dollar of overall spending** in each of the next two years. Health care and education funding will be protected. In fact, health care funding will increase a guaranteed 20% and classroom funding will continue to rise to match new enrollment.

## 7. 825,000 New Jobs for Ontario

Proving the so-called 'experts' wrong, Mike Harris fixed the problems plaguing Ontario by cutting taxes and eliminating barriers to growth. The result is increased economic growth and **540,000 new jobs since 1995** - well ahead of schedule in our five-year commitment to generate 725,000 new jobs for Ontario. This plan maintains our momentum and will help fuel the creation of **825,000 more new jobs over five years**.



Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey

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# *Jobs, Growth and Opportunity*

The more people in Ontario who have good jobs, the higher the quality of life for every Ontarian. Not only are people with good jobs better able to meet their families' needs, they also help keep our economy strong by spending and investing more money. After all, we need a strong economy to be able to pay for the priority services that matter most to us - health, education and community safety.

That's why creating jobs is of fundamental importance. So far, we've succeeded, with **540,000 new jobs created in Ontario since 1995. That's the largest job increase in our country's history!**

Today, Ontario outperforms Canada and the leading industrialized nations in economic growth, and unemployment is at its lowest level in a decade. This prosperity is the result of deliberate and sometimes difficult decisions. Without that kind of strong and prudent leadership, this progress could all be lost.

We've not only built an economic climate that makes it easier for employers to expand and for people to start new ventures, we've also made Ontario much more attractive to investors. And while we've removed such barriers to job creation as high taxes and unfair job quotas, we've been careful to keep rules in place to protect and expand the rights of employees.

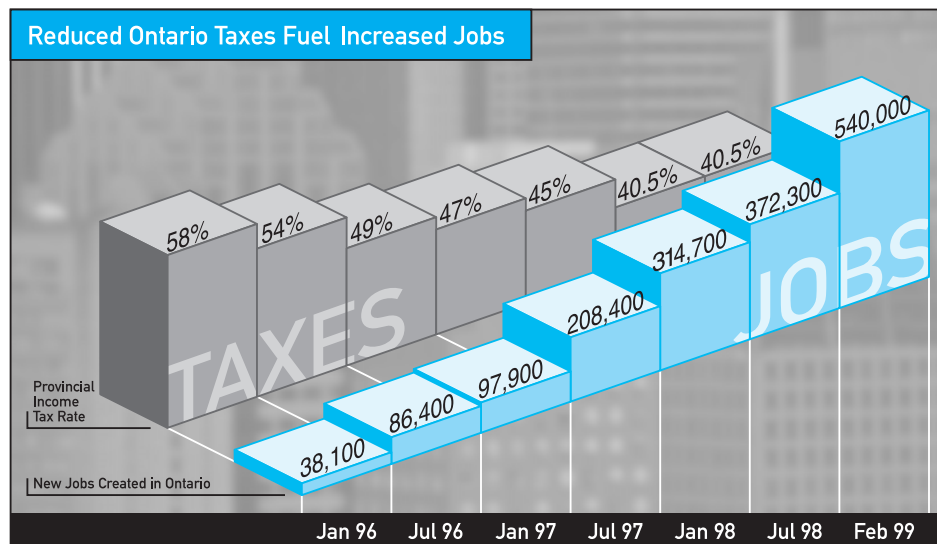
*Here's how we've helped make Ontario the nation's job-creating engine, and what we'll do to provide even more opportunity in the future.*



## CUTTING TAXES

From 1995 to 1998, we cut taxes 69 times, including a 30% cut in income tax rates. This was the biggest tax cut in Ontario history and the first real increase in take-home pay for the average Ontario worker in a decade!

It produced dramatic results. A record 540,000 new jobs were created in Ontario in under four years. That's more new jobs than the combined populations of London, Kingston and Sudbury, or more new jobs than there are people in Mississauga! It also means we're ahead of schedule to meet our five-year target of 725,000 new jobs.



Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey

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for a **STRONG ONTARIO**

When a government cuts taxes, it allows people to keep more of their money. That's a simple, clear incentive for hard work, expansion and growth. With more people working, government revenues have gone up, even as tax rates were going down.



*Source: Ontario Ministry Of Finance 1998 Fall Fiscal Update*

We cut taxes because we know it leads directly to more jobs and a stronger economy. And that's why we're going to cut taxes again.

## Income Tax Cut

**We'll cut Ontario's income tax rate by another 20%,** phased in over our next term, putting even more money back into your pockets to save, spend or invest for your family's needs. We know from experience that the direct boost to consumer spending and investment by **cutting income tax rates is the most effective way to help create even more jobs for Ontario.**

**This tax cut will return \$4 billion to hard-working Ontario taxpayers,** fueling the creation of **825,000 more new jobs** over five years. It also means that **Ontario will have the lowest provincial income tax rate in Canada.**



**Among our job-creating tax breaks  
in the past four years:**

- Scrapped the Land Transfer Tax for first-time buyers of new homes, helping create jobs in the construction industry
- Eliminated the job-killing EHT payroll tax on the first \$400,000 of payroll, a direct boost to hiring and expansion
- A nearly 20 per cent cut in average worker's compensation payroll taxes, reducing the cost of keeping and expanding the number of employees
- Removed 140,000 low income people from the Ontario tax rolls
- Ended the \$50 corporate filing fee

## Property Tax Cut

We'll cut the provincial portion of residential property taxes by 20%, phased in over our next term, providing relief to every homeowner and renter in Ontario. (We'll make it mandatory for owners of rental units to pass on their savings to tenants through lower rents.) **This tax cut will put \$500 million back in the hands of individuals and families.**

This is in addition to our existing plan to cut commercial and industrial property taxes by \$500 million to help businesses in Ontario's highest-taxed areas. **That's a total of one billion dollars going back to Ontario's hard-working people through property tax cuts!**

## New Jobs Created in Ontario from 1989 to 1999

Mike Harris  
Government Elected

725,000

500,000

250,000

Net new jobs  
since Sept. '95  
Throne Speech

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey

## Taxpayer Protection

Cutting taxes is just the first step towards fair treatment for taxpayers. We will also protect our hard-earned progress by giving taxpayers a direct say in how their money is being managed.

Our **Taxpayer Protection Act** will cover all of the major provincial taxes, from the sales tax to gasoline tax, and will **stop governments from increasing taxes or imposing new ones** without first getting your approval through a province-wide vote.

## Fighting Job-Killing Federal Payroll Taxes

Every year, the federal government collects, from workers and employers, billions of dollars more in Employment Insurance premiums than it pays out. In Ontario alone in 1997 the federal government collected \$8 billion in EI premiums and paid out only \$3.4 billion in benefits to unemployed people.

The result is an extra job-killing tax on Ontario businesses and workers. **We will fight for fairness by demanding the federal government cut the EI premium rate** from \$2.55 to below \$2 for workers and make a similar cut for employers.

## Our Own Tax System

When the federal government imposes tax increases, provincial taxes are automatically hiked. If we had an independent tax system, we could free ourselves of those tax hikes and have more flexibility in designing tax breaks to create jobs. Quebec is already doing this and Alberta will soon follow.

We're going to **establish a 'Made for Ontario' tax system, completely independent of the federal government's**. We'll do it without increasing people's tax burdens or creating onerous paperwork.

## Small Business Tax Cut

**Small businesses are our biggest job creators**, accounting for an estimated 80% of the new jobs in today's economy. Giving them a tax break will make them more competitive and directly boost job creation.

We're **cutting the small business corporations' tax rate in half** to 4.75%. By 2006, Ontario's small businesses will have the lowest corporate tax rate in Canada.

## STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY

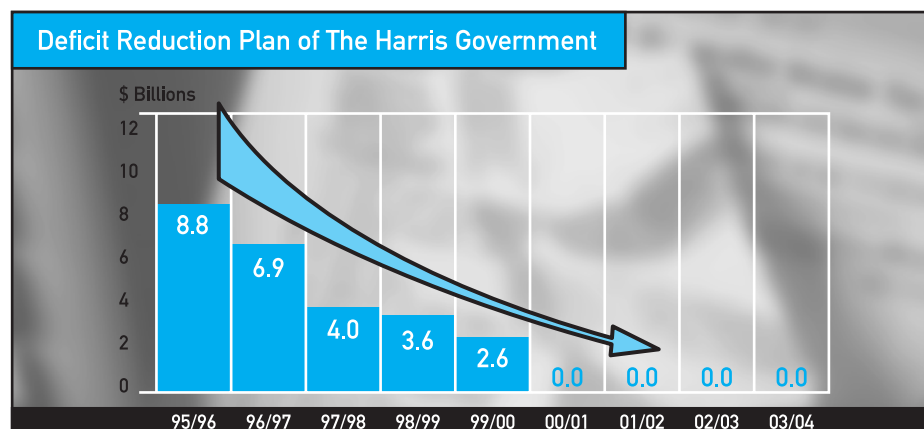
A strong economy gives us the resources to support a strong social system. Without a strong, vibrant economy, priority programs such as health care are threatened. And, in today's global economy, jobs and investment can pick up and leave on very short notice. So, we have to stay competitive.

To build a strong economy, we must get the fundamentals right - competitive taxes, excellence in education, an affordable government and effective investments in our people, ideas and infrastructure.

### Balanced Budget

When we took office in 1995, **Ontario's deficit was an appalling \$11.3 billion**. The deficit was so big that the government was spending \$1 million per hour more than it was taking in.

Obviously, there was no way we could let that nightmare continue. One of our biggest jobs was putting Ontario's finances back on track. It wasn't easy, but **our deficit is now on track to zero**. We'll continue to make the tough decisions to balance the budget next year, as promised.



Now, we must make sure that future governments don't squander that progress by running another deficit. **Our Balanced Budget Act** will require all Ontario governments to keep the budget in balance. **If they fail, the Premier and all Cabinet Ministers will have their pay docked.**

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*for a* **STRONG ONTARIO**



**We've removed barriers to job creation and economic growth:**

- Scrapped unfair job quotas
- Repealed more than 1,000 un-needed regulations that were hampering job creation
- Provided computerized business registration that cut registration times from 3 months to 20 minutes
- Began to restore balance in labour legislation
- Gave workers the right to a secret ballot vote on union certification
- Froze average Ontario Hydro rates

## Removing Barriers

Businesses naturally strive to grow and people naturally want to succeed. Sometimes the most important thing a government can do is simply get out of the way of the energy and initiative of the private sector. In the past four years, we have given entrepreneurs and businesses the freedom to succeed by removing barriers to growth.

We'll build on our successful Red Tape Review Commission by creating a **permanent red tape watchdog** to prevent and eliminate job-killing rules and regulations. All new government regulations will have to pass a **business impact test** to make

sure they're not standing in the way of new jobs or threatening existing ones.

## Expanding Workers' Rights

Whether you're in a union or not, we think the focus should be on protecting your individual rights. That's why we've worked to restore the balance of power between unions and employers while strengthening the rights of individual workers.

We've already boosted workplace democracy by giving workers secret ballot votes on certifying and decertifying unions as well as on strike votes. We'll **strengthen the right of workers** to decide, by secret ballot vote, whether they want to continue to be represented by a union. We'll also require that ballot questions be clear and easily understood.

With the way the workplace is changing, more workers and companies want to set up arrangements other than the traditional Monday to Friday work week. **We'll give workers and employers more flexibility in designing work arrangements to meet their needs**, such as flex-time or four-day weeks.

People have more rights to information about public figures than ever before. Our 'sunshine law' for government employees reveals the salaries and benefits of the top paid people on the public payroll, and there are similar laws covering executives in corporations. We'll create a **'sunshine law' for union bosses, requiring top executives to disclose their salaries, benefits and expenses** to union members.

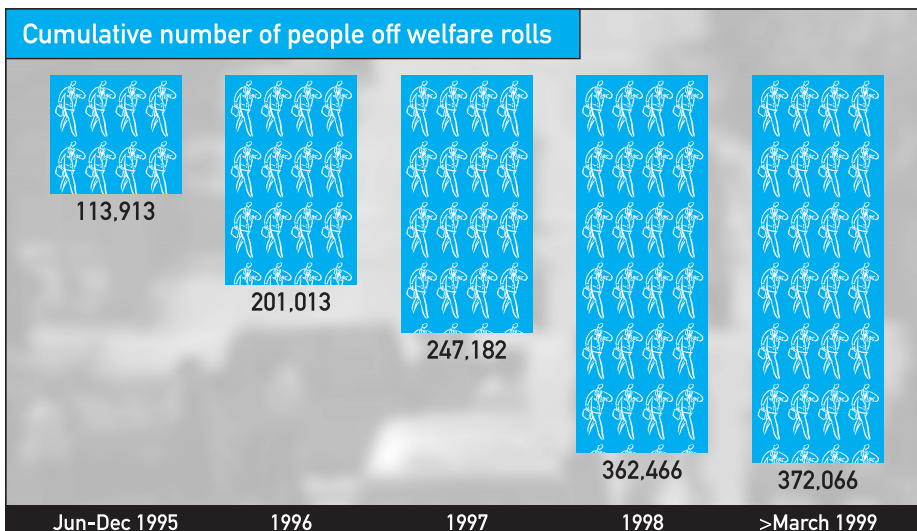
## Building for Jobs

One thing we know Ontario will need to compete for jobs and investment in the new economy is an advanced information infrastructure. In fact, we have an opportunity to make our province one of North America's most important locations for information services and connections.

We'll dedicate up to \$20 million a year from our new SuperBuild Growth Fund (*see page 47*) to **build a global Internet and electronic business hub in Ontario**. It will be the first hub in Canada, helping establish us as a magnet for information technology business and jobs.

## GETTING PEOPLE BACK TO WORK

Building a prosperous Ontario means helping everyone achieve a better life. That includes helping people trapped in a cycle of welfare dependency to get back into the workforce. We're proud to have **helped close to 400,000 people get off welfare** and put their lives back on track since 1995. That's the fastest drop in welfare dependency ever recorded in Canada — **an average of nearly 12 people an hour since the day we were elected!**



Source: Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services

**STRONG LEADERSHIP**  
*for a* **STRONG ONTARIO**

As a result, **Ontario has gone from having the highest number of people per capita on welfare in Canada to the lowest.** But some people need more help to trade the welfare trap for the pride and self-sufficiency of a new job.

**We've reformed welfare and ended "money for nothing" in Ontario:**

- Launched work-for-welfare, which has put welfare recipients to work serving their communities, getting real life job experience, training or preparing for jobs
- Prohibited people in jail from collecting welfare
- Established a welfare fraud hotline which has uncovered almost 15,000 cases of abuse and fraud and saved taxpayers nearly \$100 million this past year alone
- Cut excessive welfare rates to 10% above the average of the other provinces (while allowing recipients to work and earn back the difference between the new and old rates without financial penalty)
- Required that all able-bodied recipients work, learn or train in return for their benefits
- Created the Learning, Earning and Parenting program which requires teen parents on welfare to stay in school and take parenting courses
- Moved disabled individuals into a more generous support program tailored for their needs
- Ended "corporate welfare" by cancelling \$225 million in annual grants to corporations

## Remedial Training

One reason some people stay trapped on welfare is that they can't read or write well enough to get a job. **We'll provide remedial training for any welfare recipient who can't pass a basic language and math test.** This training program will be mandatory for all non learning-disabled recipients to help ensure they're 'job-ready'.

## Drug Treatment

It's common sense — you can't get off welfare and hold a job if you're addicted to drugs. That's why **we'll provide mandatory treatment for welfare recipients who use drugs.** We'll help them get off drugs, off welfare and back on their feet again. Those who refuse treatment or who won't take tests on request will lose their benefits.

## Case Workers

For far too long, welfare case workers had to look after so many cases that they didn't have much time to weed out fraud artists or help legitimate recipients get new jobs.

Now that the number of people on welfare has dropped so dramatically, caseworkers can become much more than cheque dispensers. **We'll provide an advanced training program for welfare case workers on the new focus of their profession - putting people back to work.**

## Work-for-Welfare

As we expected, implementing workfare has been a challenge. We've made strong progress and learned a lot about making the system work better. Because workfare has proven to be so successful in moving people off of welfare and into jobs, we're determined to expand our province-wide work-for-welfare system for all able-bodied recipients. It simply doesn't make sense to pay people to sit at home and do nothing.

So, we'll take action to expand and enhance our work-for-welfare system.

- We'll **open our parks and roads maintenance programs to workfare participation** by making sure union agreements aren't interpreted as barriers to work-for-welfare. Of course, we'll also make sure that we don't replace any paid workers with workfare participants.
- We'll **double our short-term targets for workfare participation** in both private sector and community service placements.
- We'll **encourage municipalities to undertake more workfare programs** by increasing funding for those that exceed their targets. We'll hold money back from municipalities that fall short of their obligations.

## Waste, Fraud & Abuse

We'll continue to crack down on waste, fraud and abuse in the welfare system by imposing a **zero tolerance policy for welfare fraud**. Right now, someone convicted of welfare fraud can start collecting welfare again in only three months. That's not fair to those who play by the rules. **Those convicted of welfare fraud will be PERMANENTLY banned from getting welfare in Ontario.**

**STRONG LEADERSHIP**  
*for a* **STRONG ONTARIO**

## MAKING GOVERNMENT WORK SMARTER, FASTER & BETTER

Years of wasteful and inefficient service to the public by all levels of government have left taxpayers frustrated. That's why our government moved quickly to shake up the system and put the 'service' back into public service.

Ontario's public servants are rising to the challenge and recently won **an international gold medal** from the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management for their initial efforts to serve people better! But we want to do even more.

### **We've found plenty of common sense ways to cut government waste and improve efficiency:**

- Cut the number of politicians at Queen's Park from 130 to 103, the first cut of its kind since 1933! This will save taxpayers \$11 million a year
- Reformed MPP compensation, eliminating tax-free allowances and the gold-plated pension plan, while cutting the average pay of politicians by five percent
- Reduced the size of the public service by 16,000 for savings of \$650 million a year
- Cut the cost of government administration by 35%, saving taxpayers \$300 million a year
- Reducing the number of municipalities and school boards, resulting in more than 2,200 fewer local politicians

### **Cutting Waste**

Government tends to grow like a weed. Under old-style government management, waste was inevitable — new programs would be started every year, and old programs would have their budgets renewed and increased long after their usefulness had ended.

Under our government, **all existing programs are reviewed and must be justified** for cost, necessity and efficiency.

We've found lots of ways to cut government waste, fraud, inefficiency and duplication, but we know the job is not finished.

**We'll continue to find every misdirected taxpayer dollar and put it back to work for you.**

By trimming fat and operating more efficiently, **we will save taxpayers one**

**cent from every dollar the government spends** in each of the next two years. We'll do that even while honouring our commitments to hike classroom education funding to match enrollment and increase health care spending a guaranteed 20%!



## Public Servants

When we took office, the Ontario Public Service was too big. It had been growing unchecked for many years. By bringing in more efficient management systems and ending wasteful or unproductive programs, we've reduced the size of the bureaucracy by 16,000 positions, saving taxpayers \$650 million a year.

We're not only committed to having a more efficient public service, but also to attracting bright, young, talented people to government work. The average age in the public service is 46, with only 5% of staff less than 30 years old.

We'll set **new and higher standards for public service recruitment** to meet modern needs. The goal is to make ours the best public service in the world — smaller, quicker, less bureaucratic, less expensive, and more responsive. Government employees tell us we're well on our way to this goal, and that their work has become more rewarding and there is new energy in the public service.

## Customer Service & Satisfaction

We have to change the way government deals with its customers by ensuring that customer satisfaction and service are at the top of the priority list.

**We'll make customer satisfaction part of the basis for promotions or bonuses in the public service.** We'll provide customers with complaint/compliment forms at all offices as well as a toll-free number and an Internet e-mail address to provide their comments about Ontario government services that they've received.

We'll also introduce a ***Declaration of Taxpayer Rights***, including:

- The right to be treated with courtesy and respect,
- The right to be treated as an honest and law-abiding citizen, unless proven otherwise,
- The right to know why you or your business is being contacted, audited or inspected, and
- The right to timely response to your communications with government.

**STRONG LEADERSHIP**  
*for a* **STRONG ONTARIO**

## Service Where and When You Need It

People have been saying for a long time that government should be run more like a good business, putting the needs of the customer first.

We'll make government services more convenient and accessible:

- **More common counters.** This system provides 'one stop shopping' for most government services, information and advice at key locations across the province. If they can't get what you need on the spot, they can at least order it for you or tell you the easiest way to obtain it. We'll expand the use of common counters to more locations province-wide, and work to get the federal and municipal governments to join us in this program.
- **Complete business registration at one location.** We already offer 83 computer terminals in government offices that allow people to register a new business in 20 minutes instead of the 12 weeks it used to take. We'll take the next step by integrating this system with other Ministries and the federal government.
- **More electronic kiosks with more services.** These user-friendly computer terminals in 60 locations in Ontario allow people to renew their driver's licenses and plate stickers, pay fines, change address information and more without worrying about government office hours or long line-ups. We'll provide more kiosks across the province and look for ways to offer even more services through them.
- **More Internet services.** We're already using the Ontario government's website ([www.gov.on.ca](http://www.gov.on.ca)) to provide free government information, collect e-mail to the premier and ministers, and allow people to order and pay for government publications. We will use the Internet to offer even more services and information, including submitting applications and forms, and renewing licenses and plate stickers.

## Selling Things We Don't Need

Over the years, Ontario's various governments have bought or built different kinds of buildings all over the province. The province also owns a huge variety of businesses, vehicles, parcels of land and other assets. We are conducting a complete review of everything government owns. Incredibly, this is the first time this common sense step has ever been taken! Not surprisingly, we're finding that many of the things government owns aren't needed anymore.

Over the next five years, we'll maximize taxpayers' value by **selling surplus land, buildings and other non-essential holdings** that are tying up our precious resources. We're also reviewing all government operations and finding many that can be done cheaper and better outside of government. So, **we'll use the private sector to provide equal or better services wherever it's safe, practical and cost-efficient.**

# A Better Place to Live

We believe government's job is pretty simple - to do the things that only government can or should do, and to do them very well.

That list of essential priority services includes providing dependable health care and quality education, keeping our communities safe and preserving our province's natural heritage. By doing our job well in these areas, we make Ontario a better place to live for you and your family.

## A HEALTHIER ONTARIO

Making sure every person in Ontario has access to top quality health care is our most urgent concern. Our health care system distinguishes us as Canadians, and we're proud of it.

**Our government is fully committed to the principles of the Canada Health Act, including universal access to a publicly funded health care system.** You and your family need to know that medical care will be available when and where you need it.

That's why we made the tough decisions needed to modernize our health care system. The changes we made weren't easy, but, as the experts in the system told us, they were long overdue.

When we took office, the health care system had been under incredible strain for many years. With Ontario mired in a deep recession, pressure on the system continued to rise. Only because of our economic turnaround have we been able to start giving health care the resources it needs.

Back in 1995, the federal government had just begun cutting the money it transfers to Ontario for health care. Although hard-working Ontarians paid for Ottawa's support with their tax dollars, **the federal government cut \$2.8 billion from your health care funding.** In spite of those cuts, **we succeeded in increasing Ontario's health care funding to \$18.9 billion - by far the highest in provincial history.**

Previous provincial governments avoided tough decisions. They closed thousands of hospital beds and allowed money to be wasted maintaining under-used buildings instead of spending on front-line patient care.

Past governments have also known for years that more money needed to be directed into community-based programs and home care, but no one would make the tough decisions to change the way money was being spent.

Doing the right thing isn't always easy or politically popular in the short term, but with strong leadership and expert advice it can be done. The result will be a better health care system for your family.

But the job of creating a modern health care system isn't finished. **We will increase funding by another 20%** over the next five years to meet future needs and guarantee you access to the health services you deserve.

Above all, we need to maintain a strong and growing economy to provide the resources to meet tomorrow's needs. That's what our plan is all about.

#### More health care services so far:

- \$1.2 billion more for long term care - resulting in 35% more beds and expanded community-based services
- Increased the number of women protected by breast cancer screenings to 325,000 up from just 65,000 in 1995
- Provided a pneumonia vaccine for the elderly and very ill
- First created and then doubled funding for the "Healthy Babies, Healthy Children" program to screen all newborns and identify children at risk
- Invested \$225 million over two years as part of our plan to reduce emergency room waits
- Provided an extra \$67 million in funding for hospitals in high-growth areas
- Established a university program and more jobs for nurses

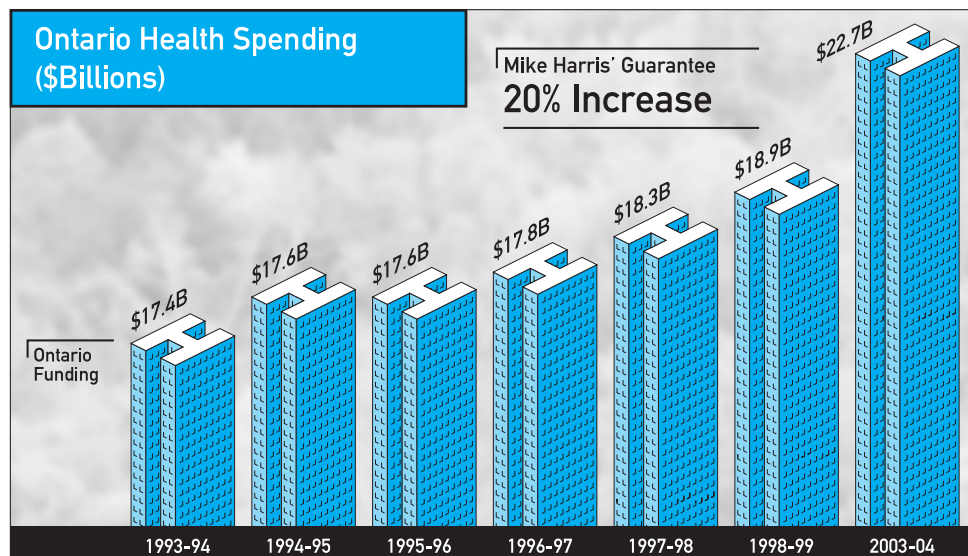
## Health Care Funding

**We've already increased health care spending** to \$18.9 billion - by far the highest level in Ontario's history.

In the past four years, **we've had to replace every one of the \$2.8 billion dollars Ottawa has cut** from Ontario's transfer payments just to keep our health care funding stable. **On top of that, we've added \$1.5 billion in new funding** to expand and improve health care services.

However, our population is aging and the cost of medical treatment is growing. Demand for health care services will continue to rise. The health care system will need even more money in the future.

In order to meet future health care needs, **we will increase funding for health care a guaranteed 20% in our next term.** Based on the latest 1998-99 figures, this will mean nearly \$4 billion a year **more** for your health care by 2003-4.



Source (93-99): Ontario Ministry of Finance

Thanks to our strong economy, fueled by tax cuts and job growth, we now have the financial security to guarantee this funding.

### Health Money Back from Ottawa

Mike Harris fought hard to get the federal government to restore the money they cut from our health care system. Just recently, he convinced them to give some of that \$2.8 billion back to our province. **We're putting every penny of the \$900 million we've recovered from Ottawa straight into health care services.**

It's a start, but Ottawa should be doing much more. Our plan contributes more new Ontario funding towards health care than the federal government is putting back in. Mike Harris will continue to fight for your health care dollars and, **if we recover more of our federal funding, it will always go straight into health care.** But, we've learned not to count on Ottawa - **our plan guarantees a 20% health care funding increase even without more federal help.**

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## Patients' Bill of Rights

We think that your right to a top quality health care system deserves to be guaranteed and that you should know exactly what you're entitled to when you show up at a hospital or call on community-based care.

We'll introduce a *Patients' Bill of Rights* to guarantee the people of Ontario excellent health care. The Bill will include the rights to:

- **Guaranteed access to health services.**  
(See box at right)
- **Access to complete information on your own health**, including all of your records, doctor's notes and test results as well as the right to a clear explanation of all procedures, drugs and options for treatment.
- **Treatment with respect** - respect for the privacy of your health issues and records, as well as respect for your personal dignity and safety.

Hospitals will have their funding directly tied to how well they live up to their service obligations to you under the Patients' Bill of Rights.

## Patient Satisfaction

We need to make sure that your rights under this new law are being respected and that you're getting the health care you deserve. One way we'll do this is to start **measuring patient satisfaction**. Customer surveys will be available at all hospitals, clinics and medical offices asking you whether your rights were respected and if you have any complaints, compliments or suggestions.

## Hospital Report Cards

Patient satisfaction is just one measure of how well hospitals are doing their jobs. We also want to know if they are operating efficiently, how their service levels stack up against other hospitals, and where there is room for improvement. Surprisingly, no Ontario government has ever regularly measured these basic indicators of hospital performance.

We'll use patient surveys along with regular and random audits to **test how well our hospitals are doing and publish the hospital report card results in your local newspaper.**

### Access guarantees under the Patients' Bill of Rights will include:

- Emergency room assessment within 15 minutes of arrival
- A minimum 60 hour hospital stay after birth offered to every new mother in Ontario
- At least one follow-up phone call and the offer of a home visit within two days of a new mother leaving hospital
- Ambulance response times cut by an average 10%
- Waiting times for cancer radiology of no more than four weeks (the recommended standard for Canada)

The lowest-scoring hospitals will get the help they need to improve their services to people. We'll form teams of health care efficiency and service experts to work with the weaker performers to revamp their systems, and we'll involve staff from the top-performing hospitals in helping the less successful hospitals learn to do better.

## Smarter Spending

We'll continue to **root out waste, fraud and abuse** in the health care system, and put the savings directly back into front-line patient care.

As part of that effort, we'll fast-track **new 'smart card' technology** to add drug information, organ donation information, medical records, allergies and other health records to your OHIP card. Along with better links among medical institutions, this will help prevent errors such as over-prescription of drugs, as well as fraud and abuse of the system. Every dollar saved will be another dollar put straight back into front-line patient services.

## More Doctors Where They're Needed

We have some of the best-trained doctors in the world. The problem is that they're not always located where we need them. Many communities are experiencing shortages of specialists and GPs, including many rural and Northern communities. We are working with the medical profession to find solutions, and are paying doctors more money if they'll help fill some of the gaps, such as emergency room service in Northern Ontario.

But we need to tackle the problem at the root - the fact that not enough doctors are going where they're needed. You can't force someone to work where they don't want to, but we can offer some powerful incentives.

### More health care services so far:

- Put another \$225 million into emergency room funding
- Provided new or expanded kidney dialysis service in 20 communities, so patients can receive dialysis services closer to their homes
- Covered 700 more drugs under the Ontario Drug Benefit Plan, and added 140,000 more low-income earners and seniors to the drug program
- Tripled the number of MRI machines, giving Ontario more than all other provinces combined and doubling the number of people who can be screened
- Opened 70 rural hospital emergency rooms for 24 hour service
- Helped 5,000 at-risk families with pre and post-natal support, counseling and education
- Offered the first province-wide measles vaccination program in Canada

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Subject to community needs, **we'll offer free tuition** to students entering medical school, or already studying medicine, if they're willing to **re-locate and practice in an under-serviced area on graduation**. They have to commit to stay and service that community for a minimum of five years.

## Supporting Nurses

Nurses are fundamental to our health care system. Our new investments in community care depend directly on their skills and hard work. That's why we set up a task force on nursing and have accepted all of its recommendations. For example, we recently announced **\$375 million in funding this year to hire more nurses. Over three years, we'll have added twelve thousand more nurses** for every aspect of our health care system, from hospitals to home care. That's just one step in our plan to support nursing in Ontario.

In order to give nurses a greater voice in hospitals, we'll insist on the creation of a **Chief Nursing Officer as a key executive position in hospitals**.

We also think a lot of basic health care services are provided just as well by nurse practitioners, and that more of them could be employed, particularly in providing primary care services in underserved areas of Ontario. So, we'll **increase funding for nurse practitioners** and take an aggressive approach to getting more of them into practice across the province.

## Off the Streets - Into Care

People end up on the street for a number of reasons. Many of them need medical or psychiatric help, but are refusing it or can't understand their own problems.

This situation was made much worse by well-intentioned but wrong-headed policies by previous governments, which decided to push patients out of institutions where they were getting help. Now, laws passed by those governments make it very hard to put people into care, even if they are suffering from serious mental illness, or alcohol or drug addiction that makes them a danger to themselves and other people.

We'll change the laws that stand in the way of families, police and social workers so that **people who pose a danger to themselves or others can be taken off the streets to get the care they need**.

## A SAFER ONTARIO

Everyone in Ontario has the right to be safe from crime. We should be able to walk in our neighbourhoods, use public transit, live in our homes and send our children to school free from the fear of criminals.

Too many Ontario families don't have that peace of mind. Some politicians will try to convince you that crime is not a major problem. They'll blame anyone but the criminals. Try telling that to the victims of crime and their families.

We've made it clear where we stand. Our government has done a great deal to turn things around. We are putting more police on the streets and increasing support for victims of crime while cracking down on criminals. But, there is still a lot more we can do.

### Here are some of our other steps to make our communities safer:

- Putting 1,000 new police officers on our streets
- Provided police officers with modern law enforcement equipment
- Replacing aging jails with new, more secure facilities
- Introduced 90 day, on the spot suspensions for drunk drivers and a zero tolerance policy for unsafe trucks and truckers
- Expanded Ontario's DNA crime lab, making it one of North America's best
- Increased funding for the independent Special Investigations Unit, so that our police forces are not only more effective, they are also more accountable
- Dramatically increased the number of applications to have criminals, particularly pedophiles, declared dangerous offenders

## Parole

When it comes to letting a convicted criminal back on to our streets, we think public safety and the rights of law-abiding people must come first.

That's why we've set **new and tougher standards** for members of parole boards and for the granting of early release. It's just common sense that parole should be treated as a privilege, not a right.

As a result of our reforms, more criminals are now being denied parole in Ontario than are being granted it - the first time that's ever happened! Not surprisingly, the number of crimes committed by parolees has dropped.

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When criminals are released from jail, it's vital we do everything possible to ensure they don't commit more crimes. Crimes such as illegal drug use are also connected to a variety of other criminal activities. **We'll require parolees to take random drug tests** as a condition of their release. Those who fail will have their parole revoked.

There is still more work to do with Ottawa to help ensure public safety. For example, we will intensify our campaign against the federal government's 'discount law'. Under this law, **even the most serious offenders can get out of jail after serving only two-thirds of their sentences. That's simply wrong** and the discount law should be repealed.

It is also unacceptable that **Ottawa has set a target of increasing the number of convicts granted parole and reducing the frequency of parole being revoked.** We think public safety should come ahead of any quotas, and we'll let the federal government know that the people of Ontario want no part of federal plans to let more criminals out on our streets.

## Sex Offenders

We're creating **Ontario's first registry of sex offenders** to strengthen our protection against these crimes. Our new law will require all pedophiles, rapists, molesters and other convicted sex offenders - as well as those found criminally insane - to register their locations with police and update them when they move. Police will be permitted to **notify communities about the presence of high-risk sex offenders** in their neighbourhoods.

Federal pardons allow convicted criminals to hide their pasts, allowing some to abuse more victims. We think it's far too dangerous to allow this privilege to sex offenders. Over the past 25 years, 704 convicted sex offenders pardoned by the federal government have committed new sex offences. Even worse, 458 of those new offences were against children. We will demand that Ottawa **stop giving pardons to convicted sex offenders, especially child molesters.**

## Parental Responsibility

Respect for the law and the responsibilities of citizenship are something children must be taught, particularly by their parents. We think parents should get the credit when their children are good citizens but must also take some responsibility when their children break the law.

We'll bring in legislation **making parents financially responsible for property damage and other consequences of their children breaking the law.**

## Young Offenders

Our government doesn't coddle young offenders. We've introduced strict discipline programs (including a 'boot camp') for serious offenders. Young people who break provincial laws get a sharp lesson in the consequences, and we're turning many lives around as a result.

Despite our successful example, the federal government still won't take youth crime seriously. To build on what we've done in Ontario, we need real, effective change to the federal law on young offenders, including **automatic adult consequences for crimes like murder, manslaughter, robbery, sexual assault and drug trafficking**, as well as **mandatory adult sentences for crimes involving weapons and repeat offences such as break and enter**.

We'll also demand changes to the federal rules on legal aid for young offenders. We want to be able to **refuse to pay for legal aid when a young person's parents can afford the cost of a lawyer**, rather than forcing law-abiding Ontario taxpayers to foot the bill.

## Strengthening Victims' Rights

For too long, the criminal justice system treated victims of crime as an afterthought. **Our government has supported victims** through all stages of the legal process by creating the Victims' Bill of Rights, expanding victims' programs, making it easier to bring civil suits against offenders, and by launching an office for victims of crime staffed by crime victims and front-line justice professionals.

To help build on these accomplishments and provide even better support to all victims of crime, we will put all of the various programs and services for victims together under a single, focussed agency - **our Office for Victims of Crime**. The Office will be permanently established in legislation and have a new role in ensuring that the principles of the Victims' Bill of Rights are respected. It will also develop provincial standards for all victims' services.

All of this will be in addition to the vital network of shelters and sexual assault centres that work tirelessly on behalf of women victimized by crime. Our victims' rights initiatives will complement and strengthen that network in its current, independent, community - based form.

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We'll also take **special action to address the needs of seniors who are victims of crime**, including creating 'elder shelters' for victims of assault, adding a seniors representative to the Office for Victims of Crime and pressing the federal government to make 'home invasion' a new category of offence under the Criminal Code.

## Safer Schools

We have a detailed plan to make our schools safer, which you'll find on page 40.

## Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is wrong. Plain and simple. We don't tolerate it in Ontario. Our government has already taken important action by being the first government to create special courts dedicated to domestic violence cases. We've expanded assistance to domestic violence victims and domestic violence programs. We'll continue to maintain and improve those services, but there's more we can do.

**The number of domestic violence courts will be doubled.** They are an effective way of bringing these cases to justice quickly and better protecting victims and witnesses.

We'll issue a 'Zero Tolerance Directive' to all police agencies to **make criminal charges automatic any time someone breaks a condition of bail, parole or a restraining order.**

We will **link all shelters and rape crisis centres to the cutting-edge information technology of our justice system.** For example, this means that a worker in a women's shelter can take a victim impact statement or a record of a victim's concerns for her safety and send it, instantaneously, into the prosecutor's case file. It means victims and support workers can have instant access to information about court dates. And it means that, when bail conditions and restraining orders are imposed, every police force in Ontario will have those details on their computers.

## Fighting Drugs

Drugs are not only illegal, they are linked to other crimes, destroy people's lives and undermine our communities. We must stamp out drug dealing in every neighbourhood in Ontario.

We'll start by **permanently revoking the liquor licenses or business permits of establishments** where it can be shown that drugs are habitually being used or sold.



We'll also amend the law to **streamline the eviction of people who allow their rental units to be used as bases for drug dealing, and kick out drug dealers who occupy a unit owned or leased by someone else.**

We'll **give municipalities the power to shut down crack houses** as public nuisances.

And, because of the link between organized crime and the drug trade, we'll increase funding for the special Organized Crime/Proceeds of Crime police task force.

### **Aggressive Panhandling**

Whether you live in the city or are just visiting, you have the right to walk down the street or go to public places without being harassed or intimidated by aggressive panhandlers.

We'll **stop aggressive panhandling** by making threatening and harassing behaviour, such as blocking people on sidewalks, a provincial offence. We'll also give police the power to crack down on 'squeegee kids'.

### **Making Criminals Pay**

Taxpayers know it costs money to investigate, prosecute and lock up criminals, but that public safety is worth the price.

At the same time, we're committed to exploring all reasonable ways of **making offenders accountable for their own actions**, and that includes making them contribute to the costs they have imposed on taxpayers. We'll take actions such as:

- Billing criminals for the cost of their custody in provincial jails and reformatories. This policy will be aimed at criminals who can afford to pay their own way and not at penalizing their already traumatized family members.
- Using the provincial licensing system to collect the millions of dollars outstanding in unpaid fines, bail forfeitures and restitution orders. Just as with deadbeat parents, those who don't pay will risk losing their licenses or permits until they live up to their obligations.
- Getting offenders to reimburse the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board for the cost of awards to their victims.

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## A CLEANER ONTARIO

When it comes to protecting our environment, people have told us they want to see two important changes. First, they want government to crack down hard on companies that are polluting our land, air and water. Second, they want to make sure that they and their children will be able to enjoy even more of Ontario's natural beauty in the future.

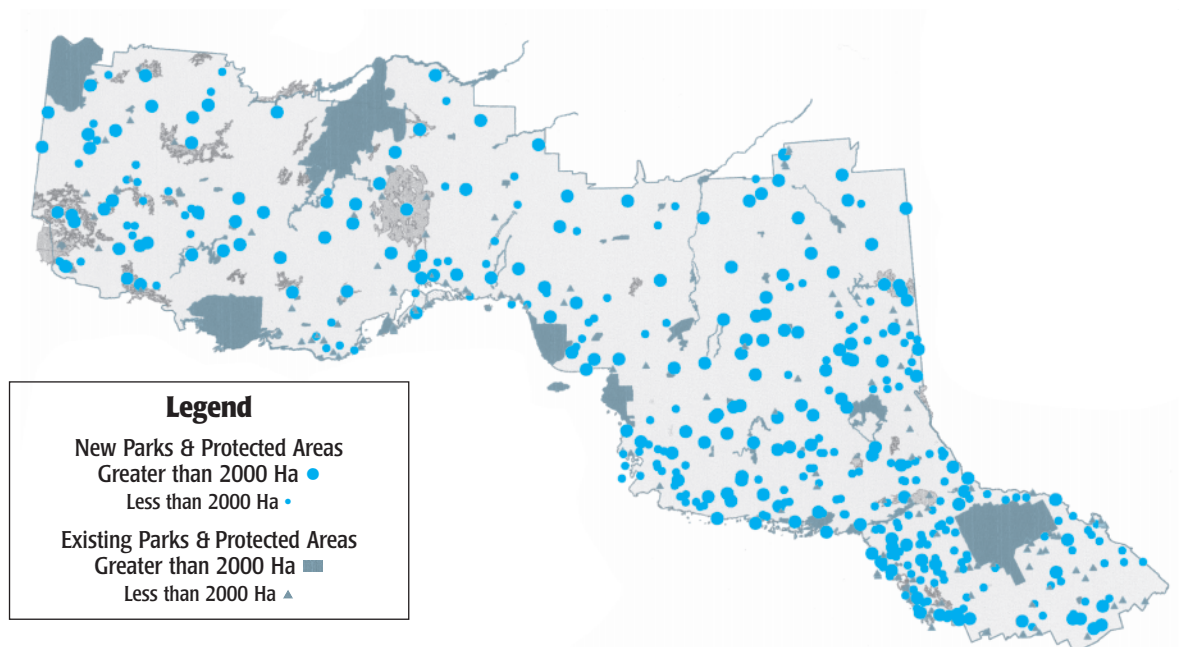
Our plan responds to both of those priorities with some of the most powerful environmental protection in North America.

### The Best Park System in Canada

**In 1995, Mike Harris promised to create the best provincial parks system in Canada.**

Now, after years of consultation through the 'Lands for Life' program, we're ready to meet our commitment to Ontario's park system with **'Ontario's Living Legacy' — the biggest expansion of parks and protected areas ever made.**

**We will create a total of 378 new provincial parks and protected areas, including 44 additions to existing parks.** That means an additional area of more than 2.4 million hectares - **an area as big as Lake Ontario** - will be protected for future generations. It will bring the total of Ontario's provincial parks and protected areas to 639, the most of any province.



In fact, **Mike Harris has now created more provincial parks and protected areas than all other Premiers since Confederation put together!**

Thanks to the historic partnership we've created between environmentalists, industries and government, there will be no loss of jobs as a result of the Living Legacy initiative. In fact, our economy will be strengthened.

We'll take full advantage of this tremendous asset for Ontario and work with rural and Northern communities to use our parks system as a major selling point in tourism campaigns.

### **Toughest Penalties in Canada**

We've already passed an environmental protection law that made it easier to enforce anti-pollution rules and deter people from breaking the law. Now, we want to back those laws up with **the toughest penalties in the country.**

We'll **double the maximum fines for a first offence** for major polluters. Corporate executives and directors who break the law will also be put under the microscope with tougher reporting and inspection standards.

Repeat offenders will get even stronger medicine. We'll **double the maximum fine for a second offence from \$2 million to \$4 million** and introduce the toughest jail terms in the country for those who repeatedly break the law.

#### **We've been taking more strong action to protect the environment by:**

- Launching Drive Clean, one of the biggest mandatory vehicle testing programs in North America, covering cars, trucks and buses. It will reduce smog an estimated 22%
- Creating a \$200 million Water Protection Fund to help municipalities clean up their water and sewage systems
- Starting a Great Lakes Renewal Foundation with \$5 million in seed money
- Taking a tough stand on trans-border pollution from the U. S. We're fighting in an American court to demand better standards in bordering states
- Setting strict emission standards for Ontario Hydro and any utility that sells electricity in our province

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## The Strongest Enforcement in Canada

To help enforce these new penalties, we'll create an **'environmental SWAT team'** - a specialized group of Environment Ministry staff who will audit industries to make sure they're obeying the rules.

We'll also combine the patchwork quilt of laws that protect the environment into **one clear, comprehensive and easily enforced set of environmental laws.**

We also think that the public can be a tremendous resource for protecting our environment against polluters. To help people get more involved in protecting the environment, we'll develop and promote a **toll-free Pollution Hotline** for Ontarians to report possible acts of pollution.

## The Right to Hunt and Fish

Hunting and fishing are traditional outdoor activities in many parts of Ontario. The license fees paid by outdoors enthusiasts help make it possible for us to preserve wildlife and their habitat. We support the proud and established Ontario tradition of ethical and safe hunting and fishing.

It's time to **legally recognize heritage hunting and fishing practices** in Ontario and acknowledge the role anglers and hunters have played in environmental conservation.

We'll **legislate the right to hunt and fish in Ontario** with a Heritage Hunting & Fishing Act.

# A Better Future

For far too many years, Ontario governments have been making short-term decisions instead of long-range plans, doing what's needed to just get through the newest crisis or the next election. That's simply not good enough. To guarantee a better future, we must start building it today.

Building a strong, fully funded public education system that helps our children succeed in the real world means thinking about what that world will be like in the future.

Getting the schools, hospitals, roads and information infrastructure we and our children will need in the future means figuring out, right now, how we'll plan and pay for those things.

Raising a generation of healthy, successful people tomorrow means investing in our children today.

As a result of the progress we've made in the past four years, we can look to the future with a strong and secure base upon which to build. Our strong economy means that we now have the financial flexibility to look, plan and build ahead.

## GIVING ALL CHILDREN A GOOD START

We'll give every Ontario child the opportunity for a good start in life, with early childhood learning, and with better protection and support for them and their families.

### Early Childhood Learning

It's clear that early learning is essential to a child's development and a key factor in how well they'll do later in life.

That's why we gave school boards full funding for half-day Junior Kindergarten or equivalent programs. Today, **69 out of 72 boards across the province offer JK programs.**

But we've heard from parents that the current "one size fits all" JK program does not provide the flexibility to meet all of their children's needs.

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So, Mike Harris asked Dr. Fraser Mustard, an acknowledged world authority on early childhood learning, and Margaret McCain, a noted child advocate, to lead a study of Ontario's system and offer advice on how to make it work better for parents and children. The result was a comprehensive report - "The Early Years Study."

## Quality Learning

What the study found was that Ontario's programs weren't up-to-date. There's been a lot of research done on what kind of programs help children's minds develop, but that knowledge isn't always being applied across Ontario.

So, we'll continue to fund early childhood learning at every school board to be offered to all four and five year olds. However, we'll set new quality standards, based on the latest research, to make sure every program uses the best ways of helping children learn and develop.

Just like kindergarten classes, no parent will have to send their children for early childhood learning and communities will have the right to set up their services to meet local needs.

## The Early Years Program

The Early Years Study and many other expert sources tell us that children do their most important learning and growing before the age of four.

Providing for their needs will mean taking an entirely new approach, one that combines health, education and family support services to help take children from birth to school age with every possible advantage.

We're already providing programs to screen every newborn baby in Ontario and identify the ones at risk for future health problems . . . to provide nursing care and other help to mothers of children at risk . . . and to help families with problems ranging from alcohol addiction to a history of genetic diseases to better prepare for parenthood.

### We've taken other actions to help give all children a good start:

- Established Ontario's first-ever Minister Responsible for Children
- Provided a child care supplement for low and middle income families, offering up to \$1,020 for every child under the age of seven
- Given businesses a tax deduction for building or providing child care for employees
- Helped 33,000 children with speech and language problems in 1998 alone
- Helped provide nutrition programs for 68,000 school-aged children
- Increased funding for Children's Aid Societies by \$170 million over 3 years
- Guaranteed more than \$1 billion for special education needs in this year alone
- Helped 5,000 families at risk with pre-and post-natal counseling and support

The next step is to integrate these programs with early childhood learning for children under four. Clearly, we would have to offer different kinds of programs than those for the older children in schools.

We will **launch demonstration projects**, working with communities, based on the ideas for pre-school early childhood learning in The Early Years Study. That will give us a much better idea of what will work for parents and children province-wide and how much these programs would cost.

Finally, **we will combine and expand all of these programs under one umbrella, 'The Early Years Program', with increased funding.**

## Child Support

Too many divorced and separated parents don't pay their child support. Many children grow up in poverty as a result.

That's why **our government cracked down on 'deadbeats'**, suspending driver's licenses and reporting them to credit bureaus, and why we're using an electronic system that puts 95% of family support payments through within 24 to 48 hours.

Our reforms are working. Child support payments are up more than 33% since we took office.

We've also been experimenting with the use of private collection agencies, which have an excellent track record of tracing bad debtors and getting them to pay up. **We'll expand the use of private collection agencies to help collect child support payments in arrears.**

## Family Crisis Leave

We've all been in situations where a sudden family crisis makes it impossible to go to work - a child is suddenly hospitalized or an aging parent is diagnosed as being terminally ill. We think families deserve our support in helping each other through these kinds of emergencies.

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In order to help people care for their children and other family members in medical emergencies, we'll allow employees of companies with 50 or more workers to take up to **10 days a year of unpaid, job-protected family crisis leave** for recognized family and medical reasons.

## Family Mediation

It's an old but true saying that children are the ones who suffer most in a divorce or family dispute. Our government has introduced family mediation programs, offered at five sites across the province, to help resolve family disputes outside of courtrooms. This voluntary method spares children the trauma of confrontational legal actions and makes it more likely that parents will stick to their agreements.

**We'll protect more children by expanding family mediation programs.**

## EDUCATION FOR THE 21st CENTURY

In today's world, a top-quality education is not a luxury - it's an absolute necessity. We have to make sure that our education system gives students the skills and knowledge they will need to lead fulfilling lives and to compete and win in a competitive global economy.

### Charter of Education Rights and Responsibilities

To reach that goal, we must respect the rights of everyone involved in the education system - students, teachers and parents - and help those involved in classroom learning work together for the highest quality education possible.

That's why we're creating the *Charter of Education Rights and Responsibilities*. It clearly spells out what students, teachers and parents need to do in order to produce excellence in education, and the rights they can expect our government to protect.

#### To improve standards and make classroom learning the top priority in education, we have:

- Introduced standardized tests and report cards for Ontario's schools
- Introduced a more demanding curriculum
- Increased the time teachers spend in the classroom
- Limited average class sizes (25 in primary, 22 in secondary schools)
- Committed \$650 million to renew and build schools, \$100 million for new textbooks and materials, and \$12 million to update school labs and equipment
- Cut the number of school boards and school politicians, putting the savings into classroom education
- Updated apprenticeship laws for the first time in 35 years

## Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Every Ontario student has the right to publicly funded elementary and secondary education that will open the doors of future opportunity. That includes a safe learning environment and the highest quality education possible. Students also have the responsibility to respect themselves and others within the education system.

## Guaranteed Classroom Funding

Our new focus on classroom education has meant more resources going directly to the teaching of students. Not only has classroom funding been protected, **we are already increasing classroom funding by \$575 million per year.**

To guarantee the financial resources needed to improve our education system, overall education funding will be preserved and **funding for classroom education will increase to match rising enrollment.**

We will also continue to **find and eliminate waste and duplication in areas outside the classroom**, such as the costs of administration and the education bureaucracy, and to put every penny of savings back into classroom education.

## Teaching Respect and Responsibility

Many of us remember a time when respect, responsibility and discipline were more firmly rooted in society than they are today. We believe we must restore these principles in our communities, and that the best place to start is with our youth.

Obviously, values are best taught at home, and parents are the best teachers. However, government can help by using the education system to support and teach respect for oneself, respect for the rights of others, and respect for the responsibilities of citizenship. **We'll make the teaching of respect and responsibility mandatory in our schools.**

In addition, we will **entrench in legislation and strictly enforce the requirement that schools make the singing of our national anthem, O Canada, part of each student's day.**

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## Code of Conduct

We also need to make it clear that we expect the student to live by the principles of respect, responsibility and discipline every day.

We'll introduce a **province-wide Code of Conduct for students** that will set clear minimum standards for behaviour, and spell out the consequences for breaking the rules. This will mean all students will know what is expected of them, what is not acceptable, and what will happen if they cross the line.

The Code will make expulsion automatic for students who bring weapons on to school property, provide drugs or alcohol to others, or who commit criminal assault. Suspension will be the minimum penalty for possessing drugs or alcohol, for threatening or swearing at teachers, and for vandalism.

## Safer Schools

Students can't learn if they're worried about their personal safety. Schools should be safe havens for our children, not hunting grounds for drug dealers and gang leaders.

Teaching respect and responsibility and introducing a Code of Conduct will help create a safer school environment, but there are also specific actions we will take to protect students.

One method of preventing school violence is to keep outside troublemakers away from students. Unfortunately, the current trespass laws aren't effective. We'll **make it an offence for anyone other than a student, staff member, custodial parent or registered visitor to be on school property** between 8 AM and 5 PM on school days.

Parents and students also need the security of knowing that everyone working at their school can be trusted. So, we'll require **mandatory criminal background checks for everyone teaching or working in our schools.**

## Teachers' Rights and Responsibilities

All teachers have the right to be able to maintain order in their classrooms so that they can concentrate on the job of teaching. They also have the responsibility to keep their skills and training up to date, and to make sure that students are learning the skills and knowledge required in the curriculum.

### Teacher Authority

Teachers tell us they need more authority to impose discipline in their classrooms. We agree they face a real problem. In order to enforce the Code of Conduct and to maintain a safe and productive school environment, we must give teachers and senior staff the power to make and carry out decisions on discipline.

We'll **give teachers the authority to enforce the Code of Conduct** and to impose penalties including detentions and suspensions, while **Vice-Principals and Principals will be given the right to expel students** for Code of Conduct violations.

### Testing Teachers

The quality of a child's teacher can make or break that child's education. We have excellent teachers in Ontario but the world is changing rapidly and we've got to make sure all teachers are keeping up. They must have the up-to-date skills, training and knowledge to put our students at the top.

It's common sense to make sure that our teachers are the best-qualified and skilled professionals, so, working with the College of Teachers, **we'll require all Ontario teachers to participate in a testing program to stay up to date.**

We will require all teachers to take and pass re-certification examinations every three to five years.

### Strict Discipline Schooling

Violent and disruptive behaviour in our schools makes it impossible for teachers to give all the good students the education they need and deserve. That's why we need a **zero tolerance policy for bad behaviour**, expelling from regular classrooms the students responsible for the worst kind of behaviour. In order to do that, we have to decide what to do with students who have been expelled.

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Students with attitude or behaviour problems still need an education. Most of all, they need a chance to turn their lives around. We've found that our strict discipline programs for young offenders instill a sense of self-discipline and respect missing from teenaged criminals.

We'll help teachers by taking a similar approach with those who cause trouble in schools and **establish strict discipline schooling programs for students who have been expelled from regular classes**. Parents of students with attitude and behaviour problems may also apply to have them enrolled in these programs.

### Performance Promotion

Students should only go on to the next grade in school when they've passed the one they're in. Unfortunately, many schools will send a student on to the next grade so that they can stay with their age group, even when that student hasn't learned enough to keep up. This only hurts these students in the long run, as they can fall further behind their peers every year.

We'll **require schools to promote only those students with acceptable levels of achievement**. Of course, students in special education courses will be exempt. Schools will also be required to provide extra remedial help for students who are falling behind their peers, with the goal of helping them catch up.

### Parents' Rights and Responsibilities

**Every parent has the right to know how their children and their schools are performing in comparison to others, and to be an active partner in the education system.**

### School Report Cards

Standardized tests are one of the most accurate and reliable ways to measure student achievements and identify the areas where we need to do a better job of teaching our children. That's why, despite opposition, **we introduced standardized, province-wide tests in the core subjects** of math, language and science in grades 3 and 6, with grade 9 to follow.

Now that test results are public, parents have a much clearer picture of whether their school is meeting the needs of their children. But, being able to compare one school to another is just the first step. Parents should also know what the lowest-performing schools are doing about their shortcomings.

**Principals of schools that fail to meet minimum standards will be required to work with their school's parent council to develop and implement a turnaround plan to improve their results. They'll have to keep parents updated on the progress they're making.**

## **Student Benchmarks**

Standardized tests can also help parents learn how students are doing - which ones need more help and which require more challenge.

We'll develop and introduce **student tests on core subjects, tied to the new curriculum, for every grade.** The tests will be streamlined, straightforward tools that will not take up too much class time. They'll be designed to give teachers and parents easily understood information on how well students are learning.

## **Dress Codes and Uniforms**

Many people have suggested a good way to encourage respect and responsibility is to impose a dress code or a uniform for Ontario students.

We recognize that people across the province have different ideas about whether or how to implement this concept. So, we'll give a **majority of parents at any school** in Ontario the power to **impose a dress code or require a uniform** for students.

## **Advanced Education**

Tomorrow's world will demand more advanced skills and knowledge than ever before. Access to advanced education will be vital for the next generation of Ontarians to enjoy prosperity and personal success.

Our plan will improve access to post-secondary education, increase recognition of excellence and achievement, provide more direct links between learning and jobs, and encourage universities and colleges to cooperate on innovative programs geared to helping students find jobs.

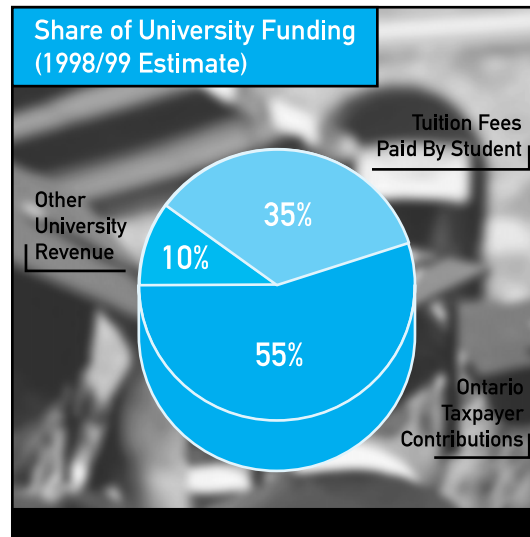
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## Tuition Fees

Tuition fees are an important part of the way we fund a healthy post-secondary education system. However, they cover only part of the cost of post-secondary education - the rest comes from Ontario taxpayers.

Traditionally, tuition provided about one-third the actual costs of providing university and college courses, but previous governments allowed that to drop to less than 20% by 1992.

The result was that post-secondary institutions were short-changed by millions of dollars. Out-dated buildings and equipment couldn't be replaced, many classes grew to a ridiculous size and it became harder to attract and keep the best instructors.



*Source: Ontario Ministry of Education & Training*

To restore the balance in funding for colleges and universities, we brought tuition fees back to the reasonable and affordable 35% level. We are also doing two things that Ontario's previous governments failed to do . . .

First, **we are giving students the kind of help they need to manage their costs.** We're providing the **most financial assistance to students ever offered in Ontario** (see box below). The biggest financial challenge for students now is dealing with the debts they accumulate while at school. That's why we're working with the federal government to introduce **the Millennium Fund for Students, the largest student assistance program in Ontario history.**

### **We're doing more to help students than any previous Ontario government:**

- Increased student loans under the Ontario Student Assistance Plan by 33%
- Introduced the Ontario Student Opportunities Trust Fund, which has raised more than \$600 million and will aid 185,000 students over the next 10 years
- Established new scholarships, based on financial need
- Provided tax credits to help pay the interest on student loans
- Doubled post-secondary spaces for computer and engineering students
- Dedicated \$750 million to encouraging research and development projects involving colleges and universities



Second, we are requiring colleges and universities to use money from higher tuition fees to **improve access to students in need**, as well as to **improve the quality of the education** they offer.

The results speak for themselves - **Ontario has a higher percentage of young people in post-secondary programs today than ever before**. University applications are up more than 8% this year alone!

### **‘Aiming for the Top’ Scholarships**

Every year, there are hard working students who earn top marks. We think they deserve special recognition and support.

We’ll introduce the **‘Aiming for the Top’ tuition scholarships for the top 10,000 students in Ontario** who require financial assistance. The program will start with the top 2,500 high school graduates in 2000 and add 2,500 more each year. We’ll pay up to \$3,500 a year of their tuition fees for up to four years, at any **Ontario college or undergraduate university degree or diploma program they choose**, provided they keep their grades up.

At the same time, we’ll challenge the private sector to get involved by providing matching funding in exchange for adding their names to the scholarships. This could realistically provide 20,000 students with tuition scholarships.

### **Increasing Demand**

Demand for post-secondary education will continue to grow rapidly in the next few years. Tomorrow’s jobs will demand even more specialized skills and knowledge . . . better student assistance is making advanced education more accessible . . . the children of the ‘baby boom’ generation will soon be graduating high school . . . and the elimination of Grade 13 will increase demand in 2002-2004.

That’s why we’re working with Ontario’s post-secondary institutions to plan for the future. Our new SuperBuild Growth Fund (see page 47) will help give us the financial resources we’ll need to build and modernize colleges and universities for future demands. **We commit that every willing and qualified Ontario student will continue to be able to attend college or university.**

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## Learning for Jobs

Learning for its own sake is an admirable goal, but we must also ensure that our graduating post-secondary students have the skills and knowledge to get a job and improve their lives.

## Links to Jobs

Too often, students are being trained for careers where there is not enough opportunity, or are getting education that doesn't relate to today's job market.

That's why we introduced **direct links between community college courses and real, existing job opportunities**. Under this pilot program, colleges work directly with the private sector to design courses that prepare students for high demand jobs, and participating companies give graduates a better chance of walking out of school and into a good job.

Right now, only 6% of community college programs are set up this way. We'll **expand the number of college courses with direct job links** where appropriate and **experiment with the same approach in universities**.

## Measuring Results

Students and parents deserve a clear picture of the ability of our colleges and universities to successfully place graduates in jobs.

So, we'll **start measuring the job placement results for graduates of all college and university programs**. We'll publish those results and give first priority in expansion plans to those schools that do the best job of preparing students for real world success.

## More Flexibility

The working world is changing and new kinds of jobs and specialties are developing. Too many college and university graduates are finding that their traditional degrees and certificates aren't opening doors anymore.

Part of the problem is that many of today's jobs demand both the academic training in which universities specialize and the practical knowledge most often found at colleges.

Instead of making students spend more years getting both a degree and a diploma or certificate, more colleges and universities should have the flexibility to design **joint degree programs**. We'll take down the bureaucratic barriers that prevent this and encourage schools to work together.

## BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

There was a time in Ontario when our governments thought ahead and tried to build a province we could all grow into. Not enough of that kind of thinking and building has taken place over the past 30 years.

As a result of this lack of forward vision, we're now stuck with old infrastructure that doesn't meet today's needs, never mind tomorrow's demands.

Much of our highway system is already overcrowded and traffic congestion is forecast to double by the year 2020 . . . many of our schools, colleges and universities are aging and outdated . . . and we're falling behind our competitors in building the information infrastructure we need to attract and create jobs.

We can't starve the future to pay for the present. We need a balanced approach between meeting today's needs and building for tomorrow. If we don't take the long-range view, we're robbing our children of future opportunity.

### The \$20 Billion 'SuperBuild Growth Fund'

One of the reasons governments have been failing to build for the future has been that infrastructure spending is scattered across the system. Separate ministries have their own capital spending funds, and their own priorities. There's no focussed coordination of all of these efforts with a view to the bigger picture of what Ontario will need in the future.

We will consolidate all of this spending under one focussed program, **the SuperBuild Growth Fund, to build and renew our roads, schools, hospitals and technology links. This will be the biggest, most effective building program in Ontario history, providing a minimum \$20 billion in new and improved infrastructure for Ontario's future.**

We will commit **\$10 billion over five years for the Fund.** We'll secure a **minimum of \$10 billion more in private sector funding** through innovative, leading-edge financing techniques such as leasing arrangements, buy-backs, and public-private partnerships so that we can lever public dollars and maximize the benefits to our province. Highway 407 in Toronto is a good example of how we can improve our infrastructure through creative modern financing.



## OTHER KEY ISSUES

We've developed detailed policies on a range of other key issues, working with people across the province to come up with practical solutions to our challenges.

These key policy areas include:

### Women

**Half of our population has special needs and concerns** in areas ranging from health care to community safety. Our government has been responding to the urgent issues raised by women with increased funding for breast cancer and children's developmental health problems, stronger support and protection for victims of domestic assault and other crimes, and more information and involvement for parents of schoolchildren.

There's still more we will do to address issues of particular concern to women, including:

- **Improving women's safety** by cracking down on those who violate bail, parole or restraining order conditions, by doubling the number of our domestic violence courts and by electronically linking all shelters and rape crisis centres directly to our justice system;
- **Enhancing women's health care** with minimum 60 hour hospital stays for new mothers, follow-up care within two days of a new mother leaving hospital, and more doctors and nurses for home care and in Ontario's under-served areas; and,
- **Providing greater support for children and families** with an integrated Early Years program of health and early childhood education, a further crackdown on 'deadbeat' parents, more family mediation programs, and up to ten days of family crisis leave for working Ontarians.

### Seniors

**Over the next 20 years, the number of senior citizens in Ontario will double to nearly three million.** This fact has been one of the driving forces behind our health care reforms, including a \$1.2 billion investment in long-term care facilities and a new emphasis on home care that will help seniors live healthier, more independent lives.

Our plan to address seniors' needs also includes:

- **More caregiver support** by giving working Ontarians up to ten days a year unpaid leave to deal with family crises;

- **More health care for seniors**, including more geriatric specialists, the first Alzheimer Strategy in Ontario, and expanded regional geriatric programs;
- **More protection for seniors** by creating ‘elder shelters’ for victims of assault, adding a seniors representative to our Office for Victims of Crime and pressing the federal government to make ‘home invasion’ a new category of offence under the Criminal Code; and,
- **More independence for seniors** by developing living wills to enforce their choices and by working with Ottawa to allow people with terminal conditions to access their locked-in pension money without onerous financial penalties.

## Northern & Rural Ontario

**Northern and rural residents often feel that they lose their best** - their smartest children and their richest resources - to Ontario’s big cities while getting little in return. We’re changing that through actions like strengthening the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, increasing highway funding to record levels, and launching rural jobs and youth jobs strategies.

We’re committed to doing even more to support the North and our rural areas:

- Bringing **more doctors and nurses** to under-serviced areas (see page 25);
- **Improving and building more highways** through the SuperBuild Growth Fund, and continuing to push the federal government to invest in our highways (Ottawa collects \$2 billion in fuel taxes a year from Ontario motorists but doesn’t spend a penny here on improving our roads);
- Continuing to properly fund the **Northern Ontario Heritage Fund** and to focus it on economic growth, and community and regional priorities; and,
- Taking full advantage of our vastly expanded provincial park system to **promote tourism in rural and natural heritage areas**.

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## Agriculture & Food

Ontario's farmers and food industry are willing to work hard and succeed, but **they deserve fair treatment from government** in order to prosper. That's why we've strengthened safety net and disaster relief programs, scrapped the unionization of family farms, protected the right to farm, brought in fair taxation on farmland, and invested more in agri-food research than Quebec and Alberta put together.

Our plan to help Ontario's agri-food sector prosper in the new century includes:

- **Getting farmers their fair share of federal support money** by convincing the federal government to base its programs on the size of Ontario's farm sector, and by living up to our commitment to meet our 40% share;
- **Enhancing our rural environment** by working with the Farmers of Ontario on their proposal for a rural water quality initiative; and,
- **Improving food safety** by updating our standards and inspection programs.

## Aboriginal Peoples

A strong and growing economy is as essential to a high quality of life for Aboriginal peoples as it is for the province as a whole. Our government is helping Aboriginal communities become economically strong and independent, as well as providing additional support for specialized health programs and making real progress in settling land claims issues.

Building on the progress made under our Aboriginal Policy Framework, we'll take new steps to strengthen the self-reliance of Aboriginal communities, including:

- **Implementing the First Nations Fund** for economic and community development;
- Working with Aboriginal communities through programs to **remove the barriers for First Nations businesses** and give them the advice and access they need to grow;
- **Renewing the successful Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy** for another five years; and,
- **Completing negotiations on the 16 land claims under discussion** while implementing the 8 agreements in principle already reached on other claims (the most progress on land claims in a decade).

# Blueprint

## Mike Harris' Plan to Keep Ontario on the Right Track

There you have it - our Blueprint for Ontario's future. The path Mike Harris has laid out in this plan builds on the hard-won results of the past four years, and looks forward into the new century.

Under Mike Harris' leadership, Ontario will enter that new century solidly on the right track.

### BLUEPRINT MEANS...

- The creation of 825,000 new jobs in five years;
- A 20% cut in Ontario's income tax rate;
- A 20% cut in Ontario's portion of residential property taxes;
- A guaranteed 20% increase in health care funding;
- Higher quality education with increased classroom funding and a *Charter of Rights and Responsibilities* for students, teachers and parents;
- Putting welfare recipients back on track to jobs and a better future by removing barriers to work such as drug addiction and illiteracy;
- A \$20 billion SuperBuild Growth Fund to develop the leading edge infrastructure we'll need for growth and jobs in the future; and,
- A \$2 billion down payment on debt reduction to build on our taxpayer protection and balanced budget commitments.

This is a time for choosing. Support Mike Harris and his Blueprint for Ontario and, together, we can keep our province on the right track.

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## HOW OUR NUMBERS ADD UP

This balanced Blueprint for Ontario is built on a foundation of sound fiscal analysis and conservative economic assumptions. Starting with publicly available estimates of current government accounts, we have used prudent assumptions about the economy and interest rates to estimate future government revenues and interest expenses on public debt. These core assumptions are:

- Nominal economic growth of 3.5% in 1999/00  
(with inflation of 1%, this implies real growth of 2.5%);
- Nominal economic growth of 4.25% in 2000 through 2004  
(with inflation of 1½% - 2%, this implies real growth of 2.25%- 2.75%); and,
- An interest rate of 5% in 1999 through 2004  
(with inflation of 1% - 2%, this implies a real rate of 3% - 4%).

This plan honours our deficit target of \$2.6 billion in 1999/2000, and will allow us to fulfill our pledge to balance the Ontario budget in 2000/2001, and keep it in balance every year thereafter.

While this plan allows us to balance our budget and keep it balanced, it also builds in a new 20% income tax rate cut and a 20% cut to the provincial portion of residential property tax. Our projections on the benefit of these tax cuts do not build in any so-called “supply-side” bump to the numbers - another very cautious assumption, especially given the stimulative effect of our first income tax cut on the Ontario economy.

In addition to balancing our budget and cutting taxes, our model also builds in a guaranteed 20% increase in the current health spending budget of \$18.9 billion, as well as increases in classroom funding to match rising enrollment. Also allowed for are one-time transitional costs of previously announced program transfers between the province and local governments, and savings of one percent of government expenditure in each of the next two years.

Finally, this plan also allows for a contingency fund of \$500 million in 1999/2000 and each year after. Once the budget is balanced, this contingency fund will be applied each year to the public debt, for a total debt repayment of \$2 billion over our next term in office.

**For More Information:**

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