
A Government for the People*Speech from the Throne*

July 12, 2018 2:10 P.M.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable members, ladies and gentlemen, people of Ontario:

As the representative of Her Majesty the Queen, it is my honour to open the first session of the 42nd Parliament by delivering the Speech from the Throne.

I want to issue a special welcome to you — the elected members of the Ontario legislature, both new and returning.

Each of you has earned your seat in this chamber by earning the confidence and trust of your fellow Ontarians. It is a high honour and distinction that should be cherished.

For this chamber belongs to the people.

Not just in that all are welcome to witness your proceedings.

Though that should always be the case.

But also in that every seat in this chamber ultimately belongs to the Ontarians who sent you here.

The privilege of democracy is to temporarily occupy these seats on the people's behalf.

And in so doing, to always be mindful that the power exercised here must always be — and only be — exercised with the people's best interest in mind.

A Government for the People

In a time of global turmoil and change, maintaining and strengthening the bond between the people and their public representatives must always be top of mind for us all.

It is very much top of mind for your new government.

A government for the people.

It is a government that has been given a clear mandate directly from Ontarians.

A government that recognizes that this mandate comes with high expectations.

Not just in the policies it advances.

But also in the manner in which it conducts itself.

Your new government does not take these responsibilities lightly.

For the fact is that Ontario is at a critical juncture.

We face mounting challenges at home and abroad.

These challenges, if left unchecked, threaten livelihoods and imperil public services.

We cannot afford to dither or delay.

To overcome these challenges, we must challenge the status quo.

Reject the old compromises.

And embrace change.

It will also require us to move past the politics of division.

We must look beyond our differences — in race, region, language, gender, religion, lifestyle, sexual orientation or creed — and recognize that all of us are Ontarians and Canadians first.

Because no matter where any of us come from, or how long we have lived here, it should be clear that when Ontarians work together, there is no challenge that cannot be overcome.

Together, we can create unprecedented jobs and prosperity — and send a message to the world that Ontario is open for business.

We can once again put Ontario on a healthy financial footing — and ensure that we can afford to maintain and strengthen our hospitals, schools and other vital public services.

And we can rebuild trust between the people and their government — based on a shared and simple principle.

You should not be forced to pay more and work harder to make life easier for your government.

Instead, your government should be working harder, smarter and more efficiently to make life better for you.

Your government intends to take a number of immediate and longer-term steps to meet these challenges, including, where necessary, the introduction of legislation.

A Government That Trusts Taxpayers

Your government's plan for the people will begin by trusting the taxpayer.

Ontarians work hard for their money. They treat their hard-earned money with respect — and are right to expect their government will do the same.

Your new government believes that no dollar is better spent than the dollar that is left in the pockets of the taxpayer.

That is why your government will take action to reduce gas prices.

Lower your hydro bills.

And provide meaningful, necessary tax relief to parents, small businesses and the working poor.

It also includes scrapping the cap-and-trade carbon tax here in Ontario. And opposing other carbon tax schemes in all of their forms.

These oppressive taxes make life unaffordable for families and put thousands of Ontario jobs at risk.

In a time of economic uncertainty, a punishing carbon tax is the last thing Ontario families and businesses can afford.

Your government will use every tool at its disposal to fight those who would hurt Ontario families and jobs by imposing such a tax on our province.

A Government That Will Help Create and Protect Jobs

Because, in the current climate, creating and protecting jobs should be something that unites us all.

None of us are oblivious to the ominous warnings from other nations about the future of our trading relationships.

In this time of uncertainty, we are proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our federal government, provincial counterparts, businesses and workers to not only protect the jobs we have today — but to also build a stronger economy for the future.

We will work cooperatively with the federal government to stand up to tariffs and make sure Ontario's best interests are reflected in the NAFTA negotiations.

And Ontario will not be standing on the sidelines. We are a proud trading partner to the world — including to the 28 U.S. states for which Ontario is the number-one or number-two export destination. We will take our message to anyone who will listen.

And here at home we will also take action to protect jobs — including the thousands of jobs across Ontario that depend on the continued operation of the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station.

And, by lowering taxes, reducing the regulatory burden and making life easier for entrepreneurs, your government will make sure the world knows that Ontario is open for business.

A Government That Will Be Accountable

Your government also intends to take immediate steps to restore faith in Ontario's public institutions.

In many places this faith is shaken. Ontario's finances have been left in a precarious position.

And too many people are feeling excluded from a system that too often seems tilted in the direction of insiders and the elite.

Your government intends to tackle this problem root and stem.

It will begin by calling a Commission of Inquiry into the financial practices of government to identify ways to restore accountability and trust in Ontario's public finances.

The era of accounting tricks and sleight of hand must end.

It will also include a thorough, line-by-line audit of all government spending that will identify and eliminate duplication and waste.

And your government will act swiftly to restore public confidence in Ontario's electricity system — starting with Hydro One.

And ultimately, your government intends to return Ontario to a balanced budget on a timetable that is responsible, modest and pragmatic.

A Government That Will Respect You

Ultimately, a government for the people must also be a government of respect.

Your new government assumes responsibility with great humility. Recognizing that, on so many issues, the people who know best live and work well outside government's walls.

You can count on your government to respect our doctors, nurses and other health care practitioners by working collaboratively with them to ensure we have a system that treats everyone fairly while putting the interests of patients first.

It will be a health care system that can count on long-term stable funding. Including 15,000 new long term care beds over the next five years and a historic new \$3.8 billion investment in mental health and addictions, including supportive housing.

You can also count on your government to respect parents, teachers and students by getting back to basics and replacing failed ideological experiments in the classroom — with tried-and-true methods that work.

It will include scrapping the failed experimental 'Discovery Math' curriculum and focusing on the fundamentals that allow our children to succeed.

It will also include respecting parents by replacing the current sex-education curriculum with a new age-appropriate one that is based on real consultation with parents.

And it will include respecting the parents of children with autism, by increasing supports for the families who need it most.

Your new government will also respect our municipal partners.

Whether by partnering with Toronto and other GTA municipalities to build a world-class transit system.

Addressing the transportation needs of other Ontario urban centres.

Or respecting the wishes of rural municipalities by putting an end to unfair, unaffordable green energy contracts that have been imposed on them over local objections.

You can also count on your government to respect our men and women in uniform.

It will include honouring the Canadian heroes of the war in Afghanistan by building a new monument.

And creating a dedicated hotline to provide assistance to our military families here at home.

You can count on your government to respect the men and women of Ontario's police services — by freeing them from onerous restrictions that treat those in uniform as subjects of suspicion and scorn.

And ensuring they have the tools, support and resources they need to enforce the law and protect innocent families from the menace of drug, gun and gang-related violence.

It will respect businesses and job creators in Ontario — who know, far better than any government, what is necessary to get Ontario growing so that we can once again be the engine of Canada's economy.

Your new government will respect consumers and trust adults to make the responsible choices that work best for them. That's why it will expand the sale of beer and wine to convenience stores, grocery stores and big-box stores.

And it will respect workers — across all professions and trades — by ensuring everyone gets a fair opportunity to compete for opportunities and build their careers here in Ontario.

A New Dawn in Ontario

Change will not be easy.

It will require a unity of purpose. A clear vision. And a lot of hard work.

But Ontario has everything it needs to succeed.

Abundant natural resources.

World-class health care and education systems.

The good fortune to sit at the crossroads of global and continental trade.

And the greatest, hardest-working people in the world.

The challenges facing our province are real. And they will not be taken lightly.

So yes, the road ahead will not be easy.

But the path is clear.

A new day has dawned in Ontario.

A day of prosperity and opportunity.

For everyone.

And help is here.

Thank you.