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2021 Burden Reduction Report: Fueling Future Growth by Modernizing Ontario’s Regulatory System

Read about the changes we have made over the past year to make it easier for businesses to understand and comply with the rules — while always ensuring that the health, safety and well-being of people and communities across Ontario remains paramount.

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A message from the Premier

The pandemic has shown that our work to reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens is more important than ever. Ontario is the manufacturing engine of Canada, and the pandemic has made it clear that we are a supply chain economy. Ontario supplies an incredible number of components to businesses across Canada — and right across North America.

We can't afford to let our costs get out of line, because we're up against stiff competition from other suppliers. We need to keep operating costs for Ontario businesses as low as possible — while strengthening those standards that are essential to keeping people safe and protecting the environment.

The biggest single lever we have to support Ontario businesses is to make regulations easier, faster and less costly to comply with. We're working hard to do that.

And we're making progress. For example, we're automating and introducing electronic submissions to get life-saving drugs and devices to Ontarians faster. We're deploying state-of-the-art technology, including drones, to transform inspections. And we're switching to a digital reporting service for ensuring that hazardous waste is properly stored, transported, processed and managed. This means businesses will no longer have to submit over 450,000 manifests on paper per year.

These actions are strengthening our province's status as one of the pillars of the North American supply chain. And we're helping communities, businesses and workers as we continue the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario

A message from the Minister

Since taking office in 2018, our government has been working to remove regulatory burdens that hold back investment and curtail opportunities for job creators, non-profit organizations and workers across the province. As the Premier highlights in his message in this report, the pandemic has made this work more important than ever.

Over the past year, we've taken important steps to reduce how much it costs in time and money to comply with regulations — while maintaining and strengthening rules that are essential to the quality of life we enjoy in Ontario.

This report details three key areas where we've made major progress:

- putting burden reduction principles at the forefront of the day-to-day work of government by amending, introducing and eliminating regulations
- using state-of-the-art technology to make it easier for businesses to comply with regulations and to reward good actors that play by the rules
- taking dozens of actions through four high-impact burden reduction bills to support businesses and simplify, modernize and streamline regulations. We'll continue this work by introducing another high-impact burden reduction bill this fall

We're making Ontario an even better place to do business. Through our work to modernize our regulatory system, we're creating a supportive environment for growth and job creation that will help to build prosperity for people across our province.

Nina Tangri

Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction

Tracking our progress

Although this year has presented extraordinary challenges, both at home and around the world, Ontario has continued to take action to reduce burdens on businesses and people.

Through a number of significant burden reduction and regulatory modernization initiatives, we've worked across government to make life easier in response to the pandemic's demands — while also opening up opportunities for businesses, organizations and people to work towards a brighter future.

As always, our work to transform Ontario into a modern regulator is informed by five guiding principles:

- protecting health, safety and the environment
- prioritizing the important issues — even if they're tough
- harmonizing rules with Ottawa and other provinces where we can
- listening to and gathering feedback from Ontarians
- taking a whole-of-government approach

In many ways, the pandemic has reinforced Ontario's work to modernize regulations, digitize services, and end duplicative and outdated requirements. By following our guiding principles, and by keeping protections for health, safety and the environment top of mind, we can continue to build a streamlined regulatory

system that saves businesses and people time and money.

As part of our commitment to accountability, a ministry-by-ministry breakdown of progress on regulatory reduction is being provided for the second time. Our starting point is a baseline count of regulatory requirements as of June 29, 2018. This is then compared with the number of requirements three years later, as of June 30, 2021.

The table shows how widely the number of requirements varies by ministry, depending on how significant its role is as a regulator. The variations in percentage also differ, reflecting the specific areas that each ministry regulates and the status of its ongoing efforts to remove barriers.

Ontario continues to benchmark its progress against other provinces that had a head start in their regulatory streamlining efforts — all while recognizing the difficulty of achieving across-the-board burden reduction gains in the midst of a pandemic.

As the table shows, Ontario has reduced its total number of regulatory compliance requirements by 6.5% over the three years ending in June 2021. This rate of reduction compares favourably with other leading burden reduction jurisdictions and is a significant achievement. It demonstrates our resolve to minimize burdens and our commitment to doing what it takes to protect people's health and safety during a once-in-a-century global pandemic.

Here's what some of Ontario's key regulatory ministries have accomplished.

Ministry of Colleges and Universities

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities has continued to streamline processes and remove barriers for Ontario's postsecondary institutions, while increasing transparency and creating new opportunities for students. To help our institutions meet the needs of students and the labour market, the ministry simplified the process for colleges, private and out-of-province institutions to receive consent to offer new degrees in Ontario. It is also working to improve how all publicly assisted institutions receive program funding approvals. In addition to these steps, the ministry has reduced barriers to postsecondary development and expansion by providing development charge exemptions for all publicly assisted universities.

It is also improving engagement with private career colleges by replacing the Training Completion Assurance Fund (TCAF) Advisory Board with a ministry-led consultation group and launching a review of other key policies, including reporting requirements and virtual learning for private career colleges. These reviews aim to further reduce administrative burdens, while responding to the increased need for virtual options due to the ongoing pandemic.

Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

The Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade (MEDJCT) leads our overall burden reduction progress through the Office of Red Tape Reduction and Small Business. It provides recommendations and support to ministries as they identify and bring forward measures to reduce regulatory burdens on businesses in twice-yearly burden reduction bills. In addition to this leadership role, the ministry has seen a reduction of 34.8% in its own number of regulatory compliance requirements over three years.

MEDJCT is actively clearing the path to make it easier for businesses to operate and invest in Ontario. It offers a full suite of programs and services for businesses of all sizes, ranging from small and medium-sized enterprises to large multinationals. This includes providing ongoing and accessible business advisory services across the province; a streamlined application, review and approval process for regional funding programs; and a new, arm's-length investment agency called Invest Ontario, which will provide a one-stop shop for firms looking to set up large-scale manufacturing operations in Ontario.

The ministry also continues to work with other levels of government to reduce domestic and international trade barriers. It is co-leading a multi-ministerial working group focused on assessing development approvals and permitting processes to find opportunities to consolidate, streamline and increase the predictability of approvals for industrial and manufacturing investors. Through these initiatives, MEDJCT is helping businesses effectively navigate industry requirements, and keeping Ontario open for business.

Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines

Key actions by the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines include working with gas and electric distribution companies to cut red tape and allow both people and businesses to have access to their energy consumption data. This will allow them to lower their energy bills through the Green Button initiative.

To aid in standardization for manufacturers, support trade agreement commitments and ensure strong energy efficiency standards, the ministry is removing duplication and harmonizing Ontario energy efficiency standards with Canadian and/or U.S. regulations, where appropriate. The ministry is also amending the *Mining Act* to provide relief to mining claim holders for assessment work, while providing greater certainty and a more predictable approval process for amendments to mine closure plans by establishing a 45-day service requirement.

Other initiatives that have contributed to the ministry's ability to streamline and reduce outdated regulations by 11.1% include the *Fixing the Hydro Mess Act* to help create a modern, transparent and accountable

electricity system that increases bill transparency; modernizing the Ontario Energy Board; and making legislative amendments to the *Mining Act* to retain proceeds from unpatented mining claims. In the Critical Minerals Framework Discussion Paper, the ministry has committed to reviewing bulk sample thresholds, and strengthening and clarifying a scalable approach for closure planning.

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

To ensure a green and clean future for all Ontarians, environmental protection is the top priority for the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, while improving and modernizing environmental regulations and approval processes to support businesses and communities.

For example, the ministry has recently improved several processes. This includes expanding self-registration and online submissions for environmental permissions; supporting the manufacturing sector by reducing environmental approval delays; streamlining permissions for water-taking activities to build infrastructure faster; and removing unnecessary barriers for brownfields redevelopment. The ministry remains committed to ongoing improvements that reduce duplication and inefficiencies, while maintaining strong environmental protections in the province.

Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance has made significant efforts to streamline processes and requirements for businesses, reducing the number of regulatory compliance requirements by 18.9% over the past three years.

Key initiatives that have contributed to this reduction include removing burden from the *Insurance Act* by repealing outdated court proceedings for auto insurance claims. Other initiatives include implementing changes to the *Pension Benefit Act* that streamline pension plan asset transfer notice requirements and enable employers with Individual Pension Plans (with only connected members) and Designated Pension Plans to be exempt from the act.

In addition, the ministry introduced the First Nations Gas Tax Exemption Program, which discontinues the Ontario Gas Card and allows First Nations to use their Status Card to buy tax-exempt gasoline from authorized on-reserve retailers. Technical amendments were also made to the *Liquor Licence and Control Act* to allow for improved accuracy and readability of descriptions and definitions, and for greater consistency across sectors regulated by the Alcohol and Games Commission of Ontario.

Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health has introduced a number of initiatives that support Ontario's COVID-19 response and make it easier and more convenient for Ontarians to access high-quality care, where and when they need it. These measures include automating and introducing electronic submissions to get life-saving drugs and devices to Ontarians faster while making it more efficient for prescribers and businesses.

The Ministry of Health introduced regulatory amendments allowing innovative testing options, by first enabling and then making it easier for businesses and organizations to administer rapid testing. This has provided Ontarians and businesses with an additional layer of protection to help stop the spread of COVID-19. In addition, the ministry continues to implement its Digital First for Health strategy, offering patients more choices in how and where they receive high-quality care. Virtual care options are now available for doctor's services, home care, urgent care and COVID-19 management.

Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development has continued to reduce red tape and modernize regulations to help businesses and workers understand their requirements and better support them throughout the pandemic.

After extensive consultations with affected stakeholders, it amended the Industrial Establishments regulation under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) to streamline and clarify when factories need to conduct safety reviews on certain machinery or processes before they are used or modified, while maintaining existing worker health and safety protections. The changes will come into effect on January 1, 2022. In addition, the requirements to notify the ministry about injuries, illnesses or incidents have been streamlined under a single regulation that applies to all workplaces that fall under the OHSA. This change took effect on July 1, 2021.

To assist businesses affected by the pandemic, the ministry also made some changes regarding Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) certification training requirements. These include extending the validity period of JHSC certification for some certified members and making all training available through distance learning.

To support skilled tradespeople during COVID-19, regulatory extensions were provided to those whose provisional Certificate of Qualifications or statements of membership in the Journeyperson Candidate class were set to expire within a certain time period. These extensions impact thousands of skilled trades workers and have allowed them to continue to work legally during the pandemic.

The ministry also supported businesses and workers by introducing temporary regulatory changes related to the Infectious Disease Emergency Leave. These and other initiatives allowed the ministry to further

reduce red tape and a number of unnecessary regulatory requirements on businesses, while maintaining important protections.

Ministry of Long-Term Care

The Ministry of Long-Term Care has been working to support the long-term care sector's response to the COVID-19 pandemic while identifying opportunities to modernize the sector.

This has included developing a new application and related guidelines for licensing transactions. These changes have streamlined the intake process for applications for admission to long-term care homes. They have also allowed the ministry to review applications more efficiently, modernized the corporate profile authentication process to speed up licensing processing times while maintaining a high level of due diligence, and established a more streamlined process for authentication of corporate entities.

As well, to support long-term care development projects across Ontario, the ministry has modernized the long-term care development application. This has expedited the application review process and funding approval to enable long-term care beds to be built to current design standards more quickly. This supports the government's historic investment of \$2.68 billion in long-term care development and commitment to deliver 30,000 beds over 10 years.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has made significant progress to reduce red tape by harmonizing Ontario's Building Code with national construction codes through the Reconciliation Agreement signed by Ontario under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement.

Further administrative and procedural changes to the subdivision control provisions of the *Planning Act* have also reduced red tape. Processes were streamlined by dissolving the Ontario Mortgage and Housing Corporation to continue its work under the ministry.

The ministry also eliminated unnecessary forms that were required under the Brownfields Financial Tax Incentive program to help reduce the reporting burden for municipalities. These initiatives and others have helped the ministry continue to reduce red tape and its regulatory count in ways that matter to businesses, municipalities and people.

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (which, after ministries were combined on June 18, 2021,

became the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry) has reduced duplication and streamlined processes to support sustainable economic development and important sectors in Ontario. This includes streamlining requirements for trappers so they can continue to make a living, while ensuring the necessary protections are in place to ensure trapping is pursued humanely.

In addition, the ministry responded to the aquaculture industry's interest in more flexible licensing, while ensuring that facilities are developed and operated in an environmentally sustainable manner. Forest management manuals were streamlined under the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act*. And the ministry modernized the management of aggregates by finalizing regulation changes under the *Aggregate Resources Act* and updating the Aggregate Resources of Ontario Provincial Standards.

The ministry has monitored the impact to natural resource sectors related to COVID-19 to help create prosperity and jobs across the province, while reducing regulatory compliance requirements by 14 per cent.

Ministry of the Solicitor General

The Ministry of the Solicitor General has continued to make progress by removing outdated rules and duplication, while modernizing regulations.

For instance, regulatory changes under the *Private Security and Investigative Services Act* are intended to ease licensing burdens for the security sector. The amendment is expected to produce savings in licensing fees for businesses providing security guard services by reducing the frequency of licence renewals.

Treasury Board Secretariat

Treasury Board Secretariat provides an essential role across government in public services for the benefit of businesses and people. The *Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act* introduced requirements that are time limited, do not apply to for-profit organizations and are focused on the public sector.

The act supports a public sector compensation policy that contributes to the sustainability of public services, while reflecting responsible fiscal management.

Key numbers at a glance

Ontario's total reduction of 6.5% over three years demonstrates substantial progress. It also demonstrates

that, as in the case of other provinces, it will take a number of years to reach our target. Moving forward, Ontario remains committed to reducing burdens in a way that makes life easier for businesses and people — while upholding what we collectively value.

-6.5% change in the total number of regulatory compliance requirements affecting businesses from June 29, 2018 to June 30, 2021.

\$373 million net annual savings to businesses, not-for-profits, municipalities, universities and colleges, school boards and hospitals in regulatory compliance costs since June 29, 2018.

Regulatory compliance requirements by ministry

Table excludes ministries that do not have any regulatory requirements.

Ministry	Regulatory compliance requirements as of June 29, 2018	Regulatory compliance requirements as of June 30, 2021	% change
Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs	15,839	15,955	0.7%
Attorney General	17,678	16,790	-5.0%
Children, Community and Social Services	6,217	6,202	-0.2%
Colleges and Universities	3,169	3,156	-0.4%
Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade	117 [1]	102	-12.8%
Education	35,882	34,307	-4.4%
Energy, Northern Development and Mines	25,513	22,683	-11.1%
Environment,	39,369	34,299	-12.9%

Conservation and Parks			
Finance	6,451	5,233	-18.9%
Government and Consumer Services	13,473	12,981	-3.7%
Health	29,695	29,355	-1.1%
Long-Term Care	6,598	5,920	-10.3%
Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries	6,759	6,562	-2.9%
Infrastructure	126	125	-0.8%
Labour, Training and Skills Development	10,191 [2]	9,171	-10.0%
Municipal Affairs and Housing	10,031	9,604	-4.3%
Natural Resources and Forestry	8,481	7,291	-14.0%
Seniors and Accessibility	670	671	0.1%
Solicitor General	8,589	7,981	-7.1%
Transportation	5,911	5,981	1.2%
Treasury Board Secretariat	50	59	18.0%
Totals	250,809	234,428	-6.5%

Changing the government’s DNA

From July 2020 to June 2021, our government took two key steps to make burden reduction a core part of

our province's approach to regulation.

We passed a landmark law that will make fundamental changes to the process of proposing regulatory changes. And we launched a ground-breaking project that will harness advanced technologies to make inspections faster and less intrusive for businesses, as well as more effective in protecting the health, safety and well-being of the people of Ontario.

Changing Ontario's approach to regulation

On January 1, 2021, a new law came into effect to change how Ontario designs regulations.

The *Modernizing Ontario for People and Businesses Act, 2020* — which the legislature passed in July 2020 as part of the *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020* — is our single most important step in transforming Ontario's regulatory culture. This milestone piece of legislation includes:

Making public the costs due to proposed regulatory changes

Taking Regulatory Impact Analyses (RIAs) to the next level: The Act requires that RIAs be conducted and published to show the potential impact of changes proposed in draft bills, regulations, policies or forms.

Requiring offsets for regulatory changes that would increase costs

Enhancing offsetting requirements: this applies whenever a new regulation, policy or form is made or approved for use that would create or increase administrative costs to businesses. It requires these costs to be offset by other measures within a prescribed time.

Recognizing businesses that set a high standard for compliance

Requiring the government to recognize businesses that demonstrate excellence in compliance with regulatory requirements.

Broadening the scope of work to reduce regulatory burdens

Extending the reach of burden reduction requirements to include for-profit and not-for-profit businesses.

Requiring the government to publicly report on its progress

Requiring the minister to publish an annual report on actions taken to reduce burdens.

Enshrining Ontario's burden reduction principles in law

Requiring ministries to consider the following principles as they develop proposals for regulatory changes:

- use recognized national and industry standards to facilitate harmonization
- apply a small business lens by setting out different paths for achieving the targeted outcomes, instead of a one-size-fits-all approach
- go digital by delivering services and products online, modernizing public service delivery to make government work better for people and business
- strengthen risk-based inspections to recognize businesses with a strong safety and compliance record, using accreditation to distinguish good actors from high-risk targets and better coordinate inspections among ministries and agencies
- create a "tell us once" culture so businesses don't have to provide the same information to different ministries
- focus on the user by writing in plain language and creating a single point of contact for businesses to access government information and services
- specify the desired results that businesses must meet, rather than how they must achieve them, and allow them to use, where appropriate, an alternative approach that meets or exceeds the requirements in the regulation

This will ensure that businesses can count on clear, focused and effective rules that maintain or enhance protections for people's health, safety and the environment

Using technology to support easier compliance

Our Smart Regulation Strategy will make it easier for businesses to understand and comply with the rules. It will also promote coordinated inspections to avoid duplication and business disruptions, and standardize compliance practices so businesses know what to expect.

A wide array of projects is being developed, including:

Using drones for inspections

Ontario is starting to use drones and advanced software to collect data remotely. These remotely piloted aircraft reduce the need for in-person inspections at potentially hazardous sites such as mines.

Drones can enter small spaces, allowing for a more thorough inspection, and provide results sooner. They are also less intrusive for the business being inspected.

Equipping inspectors with sophisticated measurement tools

We will start providing regulatory compliance staff with powerful tools so they can do their jobs more quickly and effectively.

For example, inspectors on construction sites will use laser scanners to measure whether the rope on scaffolding is thick enough to keep workers safe. And regulators inspecting nuclear power plants will use next-generation gamma-ray detectors to ensure workers and the public aren't exposed to radiation.

Standardizing the regulatory culture through a new code for inspectors

In December 2020, Ontario adopted a Regulators' Code of Practice that, at seven pages, is business-friendly and easy to understand.

This consistent approach across the government to regulation will help businesses know what to expect.

During 2021–22, all 3,000-plus inspectors at ministries and regulatory authorities will be trained on the new code.

Expanding a regulatory intelligence database across ministries

In March 2021, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks completed implementation of Environmental Compliance Hub Ontario, or ECHO, a platform it developed to share regulatory data across government and with key stakeholders.

Starting in 2021–22, other ministries will join the platform — which in its across-government form will be called the Digital Compliance Platform — to share data, allowing a coordination of inspections across

government.

It will also make it easier to identify businesses with a history of breaking the rules so regulators can focus on the problem actors, while at the same time identifying the responsible majority of businesses with a proven track record of compliance.

Passing four high-impact burden reduction bills

Our government has been working to reduce regulatory burdens since taking office in 2018, and the pandemic has made this work even more important. Over the past year, we have intensified our efforts in this area, including the following actions to support businesses and communities during these challenging times:

COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020

The legislature passed this act in July 2020 to get infrastructure projects built faster and put more opportunities within reach of businesses, while taking further steps to reduce burdens on businesses and position Ontario as a modern regulator. These include:

Modernizing and streamlining environmental assessments

Updating the almost 50-year-old environmental assessments program to focus resources on projects with the most impact on the environment.

Reducing timelines for the largest projects from six years to three.

Matching the level of assessment requirements with the environmental impact of the proposed project, so critical infrastructure projects can get off the ground without undue delay.

Reducing delays for sewage and stormwater projects

Providing a single, consolidated Environmental Compliance Approval process for low-impact municipal sewage collection and stormwater management projects.

Allowing simple, routine changes by municipalities — including alterations, extensions, enlargements or replacement projects — to be pre-authorized so construction can start without needing separate approvals for each project.

Accelerating highway construction projects

Identifying and proposing changes that would remove potential bottlenecks for key provincial highway projects, allowing construction to start earlier and finish sooner.

Making it easier and faster to update the Building Code

Streamlining the Building Code development process, supporting harmonization with National Construction Codes and allowing Ontario to respond faster to the needs of the construction sector.

Main Street Recovery Act, 2020

Passed in November 2020, this act modernized rules and provided support to small businesses to help them meet challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Measures included:

Permitting 24/7 deliveries so retailers can restock their shelves

Limiting municipalities from regulating noise during off-peak periods in order to permit 24/7 deliveries to retailers, restaurants, hotels and motels, and warehouses.

Increasing the diversity of products at the Ontario Food Terminal

Expanding the promotion of local food at the Ontario Food Terminal Board, whose wholesale fruit and produce distribution centre in Toronto is the largest of its kind in Canada. Changes through the Act expanded the board's mandate beyond fruit and produce to an array of agricultural products.

Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, 2020 (Fall 2020 Red Tape Reduction Package)

The centrepiece of our fifth red tape reduction package since 2018, the *Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, 2020* passed in December 2020. The package comprised over 80 actions in total, including:

Deregulating inter-community bus service

Making it easier for inter-community bus operators to provide new services, which is of critical importance to the people of rural and Northern Ontario. Reducing barriers to entry allows new carriers to introduce innovations such as using smaller buses on routes to match ridership demand.

Streamlining the land development process

Creating an Accelerating Industrial Approvals working group to develop proposals for the modernization of the industrial land development process. The goals are to shorten and streamline regulatory approvals, such as for zoning and permits, and to provide more certainty for industrial investors.

Making it easier for businesses to submit hazardous waste reports

Proposing to transform the reporting system that ensures hazardous waste is properly stored, transported, processed and managed. Switching from a system in which businesses submit over 450,000 manifests on paper per year to a more efficient digital reporting service will make the reports timelier and less burdensome.

Providing land developers with online access to environmental information on properties

Making it easier for land developers to get the environmental information they need to inform their decisions on property transactions, including real estate deals and the redevelopment of brownfield sites.

Moving from a manual records process to a much faster digital delivery platform.

Speeding up regulatory approvals for the aquaculture sector

Modernizing and streamlining the almost 25-year-old regulatory framework to speed up approval times, while ensuring that aquaculture is established and operates in an ecologically sustainable manner.

Reducing how long it takes aquaculture operations to get approval to cultivate additional fish species by 3 to 4 months by having the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry provide oversight of these applications instead of requiring them to go through the Cabinet approval process.

Supporting Recovery and Competitiveness Act, 2021 (Spring 2021)

Red Tape Reduction Package)

The focal point of our sixth red tape reduction package, the *Supporting Recovery and Competitiveness Act, 2021* passed in June 2021. The package of 90 legislative and regulatory actions and announcements included:

Creating business certainty and improving timelines for mining projects

Supporting the development of a Critical Minerals Strategy, which will help Ontario become a global supplier, producer and manufacturer of critical minerals for new and high-growth sectors such as electric vehicle and battery manufacturing, by:

- streamlining processes and timelines for issuing mining leases
- clarifying and strengthening processes for advanced exploration closure planning
- reviewing regulations on bulk samples, which claim holders collect from a mineral deposit to determine its grade and quality. This will ensure the rules balance a competitive mining sector with safeguarding environmental protection and sustainability

Improving the regulatory framework for auto tech pilot programs

Consulting about potential changes to the Automated Vehicle Pilot Program to help ensure Ontario remains a global leader in developing connected and automated vehicles.

Considering changes to rules about testing micro-utility vehicles such as personal delivery vehicles, adding new vehicle types like automated farm vehicles and removing certain restrictions around modified automated vehicles.

Streamlining the tendering and awarding of highway contracts

Allowing administration services, such as signing and submitting contract documents, to be done electronically.

Modernizing the legal framework for the beverage alcohol sector

Making the liquor licensing law easier to understand while reducing burdens and increasing flexibility for businesses by making technical amendments needed for a streamlined framework to come into effect on October 1, 2021.

Strengthening protection of Provincially Significant Employment Zones

Launching consultations with stakeholders about the initial 29 Provincially Significant Employment Zones that Ontario has designated in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. This protects these zones for industrial usage by requiring provincial approval before they can be converted to non-employment use.

Considering proposals to enhance the policy framework for the long-term use of these zones.

Streamlining approvals for proposed electricity transmission projects

Leveling the playing field by extending an exemption so proposed projects that require an environmental assessment don't have to go through additional approvals under the *Planning Act*. Extending a pre-existing exemption for Hydro One to other electricity transmitters reduces the burden on new entrants to the sector.

Simplifying licence plate sticker renewals for heavy commercial vehicles

Introducing online licence plate sticker renewals for heavy commercial vehicles, buses, school buses and farm vehicles, instead of requiring renewals to be done in person at a ServiceOntario centre.

Streamlining pre-start health and safety reviews in factories

Clarifying when factories are required to conduct reviews before they're allowed to use or modify certain machinery or processes. This will make it easier for businesses to comply, while maintaining worker health and safety protections.

Increasing transparency and accountability for the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRA)

Making changes to ensure transparent and effective oversight for the new producer responsibility model.

Amending RPRA's operating agreement to increase data privacy and oversight of costs, and to establish an industry advisory committee to help ensure transparency and effective oversight of RPRA.

Making life easier for the people of Ontario

Regulations not only impact businesses. They can also have a substantial impact on Ontarians from all walks of life. Over the past year, we've continued our work to help improve people's everyday lives by making regulations work better for them.

Helping consumers find simple ways to save money on their energy bills

Introducing the Green Button initiative, which will require electricity and natural gas utilities to provide residential and business consumers with their energy consumption data in a standard format. This will provide opportunities for software and app developers to create user-friendly tools for consumers to discover ways they can use less energy.

Extending the validation periods for driver's licences and health cards

Allowing people to continue using a wide array of licences and permits even after they expired, while moving renewals online to reduce the need for in-person visits to ServiceOntario centres, in order to keep people safe during the pandemic.

Deregulating the inter-community bus sector to improve service

Opening the way for new entrants to the inter-community bus market by introducing innovations that would benefit bus passengers in rural and northern communities, which includes allowing bus operators to run smaller buses more often on routes with lower demand from passengers.

Providing relief on electricity rates during the Stay-at-Home Order

Switching to off-peak rates to lower electricity bills for families spending more time at home to comply with the provincial Stay-at-Home Order.

Allowing students to confirm their community involvement hours online

Removing the requirement for high school students to submit paper-based forms on community

involvement activities that they must complete in order to get a diploma.

Footnotes

- [1] [Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade’s](#) baseline and regulatory compliance requirement count as of June 31, 2021 have been adjusted to account for the transfer of the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development.
- [2] [Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development’s](#) baseline and regulatory compliance requirement count as of June 31, 2021 have been adjusted to account for the transfer of the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) from the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

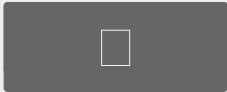
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Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

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Rural and north

Taxes and benefits

Travel and recreation