

Today's News - Friday, September 15, 2017

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Premier Kathleen Wynne is wrapping up her mission in Washington, D.C. after meeting with several U.S. leaders, including U.S. Secretary of Commerce, Wilbur Ross. Premier Wynne also delivered the Thomas O. Enders Memorial Lecture on U.S.-Canadian Relations at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Re-tweet the Premier [here](#).

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Also Today:

- Ontario is electrifying the GO rail network to transform how people move around the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), and is seeking design concepts for Hydrogen-powered trains as an alternative to conventional overhead wires. Through the GO Regional Express Rail (RER) program, Ontario will deliver faster and more frequent electrified rail service on core segments of the GO rail network and UP Express. As part of planning the electrification, Ontario is undertaking a feasibility study on the use of hydrogen fuel cells. Recent advances in the use of hydrogen fuel cells to power electric trains in other jurisdictions makes it important that Ontario consider this clean electric technology as an alternative to conventional overhead wires. The Hydrogen Rail (Hydrail) Feasibility Study will inform a decision on how Ontario will proceed with the electrification of GO rail services. A number of rail vehicle manufacturers will be commissioned to prepare designs and to demonstrate the impact that incorporating hydrogen fuel cells into bi-level trains would have on the performance of the GO rail network. This work is an important part of studying the feasibility of hydrail. GO RER will bring more two-way, all-day service to commuters and families across the GTHA, increasing the number of weekly trips from about 1,500 to nearly 6,000 by 2025.

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- MPPs are meeting with students across the province today to discuss how Ontario is making life easier for students. This school year, more than one-third of all full-time college and university students in Ontario are receiving free tuition thanks to the new Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP). Deb Matthews, Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development, met with students in Ottawa today to talk about how the new OSAP and other proposed programs will make life easier for students, including:
 - o Free pharmacare so that youth under 25 don't have to worry about paying for prescription medication.
 - o Raising the minimum wage so that students can earn more money to help them afford the cost of school.
 - o Improved repayment assistance so that students don't have to worry about paying back their Ontario student loans until they're making at least \$35,000 a year.
 - o Free online textbooks to help students cover the cost of buying their textbooks.

- o Making postsecondary education more affordable for students and families is part of our government's plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives

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Our government's plan to build a stronger, healthier Ontario includes historic new investments in health care, including free medications for everyone 24 and under through OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare, providing free tuition to over 210,000 students and on-the-job learning opportunities to help land a great job, helping 100,000 kids access quality, licensed child care and making it more affordable for families, making everyday life more affordable by reducing electricity costs by 25 per cent on average through our proposed Fair Hydro Plan, and taking action to make housing more affordable for homebuyers and renters through our Fair Housing Plan.