

Today's News - Tuesday, February 13, 2018

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Premier Kathleen Wynne is supporting Ontario workers and businesses by promoting free trade and increased partnership between Ontario and the U.S. Following a successful mission to [Washington, D.C., and New York](#) to underscore Ontario's significant ties to the U.S. and support for free trade, Premier Wynne will continue that advocacy with a series of engagements on both sides of the border. In the coming weeks, Premier Wynne will continue to hear from Ontario workers and business leaders concerned about the potential impact of NAFTA renegotiations and other economic challenges. Key events include:

- This Thursday, February 15, Premier Wynne will host a [Town Hall in Windsor](#). Moderated by Ken Lewenza, former President of the Canadian Auto Workers Union, the Premier will take questions from the public on a wide range of topics, including concerns about the impact of Canada's decision to sign the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), NAFTA negotiations and the current state of Ontario's auto industry
- The following day, Premier Wynne will attend the Canadian International AutoShow at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. The Premier will highlight Ontario's position as a leader in the automotive sector and address the impact of trade negotiations on this critical industry
- On February 22, the Premier will kick off the Toronto Region Board of Trade Party Leaders Series with a discussion of Ontario's economic competitiveness and the province's plans to continue working alongside partners in the U.S. to encourage economic growth and create more fairness and opportunity for everyone
- On February 23-24, Premier Wynne will return to Washington to attend the National Governors Association Winter Meeting. While in Washington, the Premier will meet with U.S. governors to drive home the importance of maintaining free trade and explore opportunities for further economic partnerships with the U.S. — particularly with the Great Lakes states.

These upcoming events build on the Premier's extensive U.S. engagement efforts to date. Premier Wynne has had productive discussions with 33 governors over the past year that have strengthened Ontario's relationships with key states and confirmed a broad consensus among U.S. state leaders about the importance of free trade to our shared prosperity. Ontario is also exploring new opportunities to collaborate with individual states in order to drive more growth and opportunities in a period of economic change. The province has a strong track record of productive partnership with U.S. states, such as the 2016 and 2017 Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Michigan designed to promote innovation and enhance the automotive sector's competitiveness. This collaboration has already resulted in [North America's first national, cross-border automated vehicle test drive](#) through Southern Ontario and Michigan, promoting innovation in the auto sector and driving economic growth.

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Also Today:

- Ontario is supporting the development of new, globally competitive low-carbon technologies that will reduce greenhouse gas pollution and fight climate change. This investment is part of Ontario's [Climate Change Action Plan](#) and is funded by proceeds from the province's cap on pollution and carbon market. Reza Moridi, Minister of Research, Innovation and Science launched the new [Cleantech Strategy](#) today, which will help cleantech companies launch

products and services, find new customers, and scale up in a global market that is expected to be worth \$2.5 trillion by 2022. The strategy will help cleantech companies grow and meet global demand through:

- o Venture and scale readiness support, such as improving access to global market intelligence
 - o Access to capital, including providing guidance on available provincial and federal cleantech funding and simplifying access
 - o Regulatory modernization, such as reducing barriers for cleantech market entry
 - o Adoption and procurement, by increasing demonstration and pilot opportunities
- Ontario's Cleantech Strategy includes initiatives funded by proceeds from the province's [carbon market](#) that support cleantech companies and accelerators, helping them expand and develop new technologies. This includes the [Global Market Acceleration Fund \(GMAF\)](#) and [Green Focus on Innovation and Technology \(GreenFIT\)](#).

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- Ontario has appointed the Honourable David Collenette to lead Ontario's High-Speed Rail (HSR) Planning Advisory Board—continuing progress to bring high-speed rail service to the province and cut travel times between Toronto and Windsor. Kathryn McGarry, Minister of Transportation, and Daiene Vernile, MPP for Kitchener Centre, were in Waterloo today to announce Mr. Collenette's appointment. A former federal Minister of Transport, Mr. Collenette was the province's special advisor for high-speed rail. As Chair of the HSR Planning Advisory Board, Mr. Collenette will continue to provide strategic support and advise government on this landmark project. The introduction of HSR would be a first in Canada, connecting communities from Toronto to Windsor as part of Ontario's Innovation SuperCorridor. High speed trains would travel at up to 250 kilometres per hour on a combination of existing track and new dedicated rail corridors. This would cut travel times between these major centres from over four hours to just over two. HSR will help businesses attract the best talent and boost their productivity, and help Ontario make the transition to a low-carbon economy.

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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 Fair Hydro Plan, and taking action to **make housing more affordable** for homebuyers and renters through our Fair Housing Plan.