

Today's News - Tuesday, July 18, 2017

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Today's News **Tuesday, July 18, 2017**

Premier Kathleen Wynne released the following statement yesterday on the U.S. federal administration's release of its negotiating objectives in advance of NAFTA renegotiations:

"As Premier, I am committed to standing up for Ontario workers and businesses. I see this as the next step in defending Ontario's interests and strengthening our trading relationships across North America.

While the renegotiation of NAFTA will be a complex undertaking, it is a chance to bring the agreement into the 21st century so that it better reflects the way we do business today. Over the next 30 days, we will continue our work to identify opportunities that can benefit Ontario workers, businesses and communities, while building on the strong trade relationships we have established with our partners across the continent.

My government has been clear that we are not taking a wait-and-see approach. We are actively engaging with political and business leaders across the U.S. to underscore the critical role free trade and open borders play in North America's economic well-being. Most recently, I was in Rhode Island to attend the National Governors Association Summer Meeting, where I had productive discussions engaged with more than a dozen governors to highlight the close connections between our economies.

Ontario's message is clear -- free trade and cross-border partnerships drive job creation and economic growth for everyone. I am confident that our message is getting through. Our partners across the U.S. and Mexico understand the value of working together to enhance our shared prosperity and fuel an innovative, competitive business climate.

Ontario will continue to work alongside our federal and provincial partners as we approach the upcoming NAFTA renegotiations. We have a strong working relationship with Prime Minister Trudeau and his Cabinet, and at the ongoing Council of the Federation meeting my fellow Premiers and I continue to have productive discussions about how we can work together to advance our shared interests.

We will also continue our work in Washington, D.C. through Ontario's representative there, Monique Smith, and across the United States, including through ongoing efforts led by Minister Chan, informed by the strategic advice of Ontario's special advisor on trade, John Gero.

Together, we are committed to making sure that Ontario's businesses and workers are strongly represented at the negotiating table. Free trade means good jobs and opportunities for the

people of Ontario, and I will continue to stand up on their behalf every time."

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Also today:

- Ontario is supporting [204 new and innovative projects](#) that will respond to local needs and help build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. Ted McMeekin, MPP for Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale, made the announcement today on behalf of Eleanor McMahon, Minister of Tourism Culture and Sport, at the Immigrants Working Centre in Hamilton. The Ontario Trillium Foundation's Seed Investment Stream helps communities meet local needs through new ideas and projects, such as helping people find work, helping newcomers settle in a community or helping volunteer organizations boost their membership. An additional 11 projects are being awarded [Collective Impact Grants](#), which help organizations work together to address complex social issues in communities. Supporting strong, healthy communities is part of our 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** who has OHIP coverage through the OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare Program, **providing free average tuition** to over 210,000 students starting fall 2017 and on-the-job learning opportunities to help land a great job, helping 100,000 more kids aged 0–4 access quality, licensed child care, **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.