

Today's News - Tuesday, July 4, 2017

From: Todays News (OPO) <todays.news@ontario.ca>
To: Todays News (OPO) <todays.news@ontario.ca>
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As part of its [Fair Housing Plan](#), Ontario is establishing an expert forum to offer suggestions and engage in discussion on how to make housing more affordable in the province. This housing forum, which is meeting for the first time tomorrow and will continue to meet quarterly, brings together housing experts and partners including economists, academics, developers, community groups and the real estate sector. The forum will advise the province on continued steps to make housing more affordable and accessible. The government is also releasing [further information](#) on the Non-Resident Speculation Tax (NRST). Between April 24 and May 26, there were 18,282 transactions in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, of which 4.7 per cent were by individuals who are not citizens or permanent residents of Canada, or by foreign corporations, and may be subject to the NRST. Introduced as part of the Fair Housing Plan, the NRST is helping to address unsustainable demand in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, while ensuring Ontario continues to be a place that welcomes all new residents. Improving the affordability and accessibility of housing is part of our plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives.

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Also today:

- Ontario is providing additional support to detect potential hearing loss in newborns sooner and ensure that families with children who have permanent hearing loss, or are at risk, get the supports they need. Michael Coteau, Minister of Children and Youth Services, announced the expansion of the province's Infant Hearing Program today at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario and Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre in Ottawa. The province-wide program screens babies for hearing loss soon after birth, and provides families with services that children need to develop language and literacy skills during the most critical period of development. The province's support will reduce wait times for families and increase the program's service capacity. With the early identification of permanent hearing loss, families can make informed decisions about what supports their children need, such as hearing aids or communication and language development services. These services also help children get ready to start school.

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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 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