Today's News - Monday, September 12, 2016

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As part of its balanced plan to build Ontario up and help people in their everyday lives, the Ontario government intends to introduce legislation that, if passed, would rebate an amount equal to the provincial portion of the HST on residential, farm and small business electricity bills as of January 1, 2017. Rural electricity ratepayers would receive additional relief and commercial, institutional and industrial ratepayers would also benefit from lower electricity costs.

The government also announced that it will create an additional 100,000 licensed infant to preschool child care spaces within the next five years, starting in 2017. The government's plan was outlined in the Speech from the Throne delivered today by the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Ontario's Lieutenant Governor. The speech opened the second session of the province's 41st parliament. The plan will continue to create economic growth and good jobs — the government's number-one priority. The government will also balance the budget next year, in 2017-18, and Ontario's debt-to-GDP ratio will decline — a sign of economic strength and fiscal responsibility. The government's plan will help people in their everyday lives by:

- Delivering electricity cost relief through legislation to rebate an amount equal to the provincial portion of the HST on electricity bills — a saving of about $130 annually for the typical Ontario household; eligible rural ratepayers would receive additional relief, resulting in average savings of about $45 a month or $540 a year. Eligible small businesses would also benefit from the rebate and eligible larger businesses would also benefit from the plan through the expansion of the Industrial Conservation Initiative
- Starting in 2017, creating an additional 100,000 licensed child care spaces for 0- to 4-year-olds within the next five years, bringing the number of spaces created since 2013 to 156,000 and doubling the current capacity for the 0-4 age group
- Putting a new emphasis on math skills, expanding experiential learning, implementing free tuition for thousands of low- and middle-income students and encouraging more young people to turn their good ideas into start-up companies
- Investing in skills training that aligns with the job market of today and tomorrow
- Continuing to increase nursing care hours to enhance home care, reducing wait times for specialists, and connecting a family doctor or nurse practitioner to every Ontarian who wants one
- Continuing to make historic infrastructure investments in schools, hospitals, roads, bridges and transit
- Building a competitive business environment driven by innovative, low-carbon industries, including attracting international investment, continuing to cut red tape and implementing a cap and trade program to help people and businesses fight climate change
- Continuing to work with its federal and provincial partners to enhance the Canada Pension

Plan

The Throne Speech outlines the next steps in the government's economic plan to build Ontario up and deliver on its number-one priority to grow the economy and create jobs. The four-part plan includes helping more people get and create the jobs of the future by making a high-quality college and university education more affordable. The plan is making the largest infrastructure investment in hospitals, schools, roads, bridges and transit in Ontario's history and is building a low-carbon economy driven by innovative, high-growth, export-oriented businesses. The plan is also helping working Ontarians achieve a more secure retirement.

Our government's four-part economic plan to build Ontario up ***invests in people's talents and skills****, including helping people get and create the jobs of the future by* ***expanding access to high-quality college and university education****. It includes making* ***the largest infrastructure investment in Ontario's history*** *— $160 billion over 12 years — part of which is our Moving Ontario Forward plan to build roads, transit and infrastructure. Our plan includes* ***fostering a dynamic, supportive environment for business to thrive****, including investing in a* ***low-carbon economy driven by innovative, high-growth, export-oriented businesses****. And it includes creating* ***a secure retirement pension plan for workers*** *to have the retirement they deserve.*