

Today's News: Tuesday, September 26, 2017

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Premier Kathleen Wynne released this statement following her sixth summit with mayors and regional chairs from across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA):

"Today members of my cabinet and I hosted leaders from municipalities across the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area for the sixth GTHA Mayors and Chairs Summit. The GTHA is home to half the people in our province, and strengthening the region is integral to our plan for fairness and opportunity in Ontario. The numbers tell us we are making progress. The GTHA is Canada's leading centre for business, and we have reinforced its standing as Canada's leading employment centre by adding 95,800 jobs over the past year. But we have more work to do to make this region an even better place to live, work and raise a family. My experience as Premier has reinforced my long-standing belief that it is essential for the province and local governments to work closely together to improve the lives of the people we serve. That is why I invited mayors and regional chairs from across the GTHA to the historic first summit in March 2015. And that is why we have met at least twice a year since then to keep the momentum up on joint initiatives and share new ideas on how we can make a difference for people in their everyday lives. Today's meeting focused on three main issues. We discussed our government's proposed regulatory framework in preparation for the legalization of cannabis next July. We talked about our measures through the Fair Housing Plan to make buying or renting a home more affordable. And we shared thoughts on our partnership on local projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We made important strides today. I want to thank our partners from across the region for sitting down together again to commit to steps that will create more opportunity and fairness for the people we serve. I look forward to continuing this work together. The stronger we can make the GTHA, the closer we will be to the fairer, better Ontario we want."

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Also Today:

- Today, Premier Wynne will meet with the Governor Larry Hogan of Maryland, Governor Terry McAuliffe of Virginia and Mayor Muriel Bowser of Washington, DC to discuss free trade and other shared priorities, as part of their first joint mission to Ontario.

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- The Premier released the following statement to support earthquake relief efforts in Mexico:

"On behalf of the people of Ontario, I wish to convey our deepest compassion and concern for everyone affected by the recent earthquakes in Mexico. Ontario is home to people from all over the world, whose backgrounds and contributions have helped to build our province. When a disaster like this one strikes, it takes a toll on all of us. Since September 19, we have all been affected by the images from Mexico of collapsed buildings, including an elementary school, and we have heard the stories of people who boarded buses to the disaster sites to bolster the search and recovery efforts. The devastation is widespread and we are compelled to help our neighbours

on their long road to recovery and rebuilding.

Ontario has always stood willing to help those in need, and we always will. Our government will be contributing \$100,000 to the Mexican Red Cross through the Canadian Red Cross to assist the people of Mexico in the aftermath of this tragedy. I want to thank the many people in Ontario who have individually committed to help, and encourage everyone to consider making a personal donation to the [Canadian Red Cross](#)."

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- Ontario is investing in the vitality and sustainability of francophone communities across the province through Programme Franco, a new francophone community grant program geared towards community groups, municipalities, and not-for-profit organizations. Programme Franco is an application-based grant program that aims to encourage greater social involvement, learning, innovation, and engagement for francophones in Ontario, through cultural and community-based initiatives. Minister of Francophone Affairs, Marie-France Lalonde, made the announcement today inviting francophone and Francophile organizations to submit applications for projects — big or small. Submissions must be for initiatives based in Ontario and support one or more of the following priorities:
 - o Facilitate social integration, networking and volunteerism within francophone communities
 - o Reduce barriers and increase support for vulnerable groups within francophone communities
 - o Provide opportunities to celebrate and promote an understanding of Ontario's Francophonie
 - o Build the capacity of francophone organizations
 - o Promote collaboration between service providers to better serve francophone communities.

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- Ontario is increasing access to rental and affordable housing by launching a new team to help streamline the development process and tackle some of the challenges that prevent housing projects from being built. Over the coming months, the Housing Delivery Group will work with individual developers, municipalities and other organizations to reduce barriers for specific housing projects that meet the needs of local communities. The team will be led by Provincial Land and Development Facilitator Paula Dill. An experienced urban planner, she has been able to successfully resolve a range of complex, multi-jurisdictional issues. Establishing the Housing Delivery Group is part of the [Fair Housing Plan](#), a set of 16 comprehensive measures that will help more people find a home that suits their budget, while bringing stability to the real estate market and protecting homeowners' investments.

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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.