

- What we are trying to do with this budget and as a government is speak to the very real concerns that people in Ontario have right now
- Yes our economy is in a strong position and our budget is balanced—these are good things and I'd like to thank Minister Sousa for his hard work getting us here
- But the reality is that we both know that people are anxious about their jobs and their futures
- They are worried about the soaring cost of housing, about the rise in part-time employment and the decline in benefits
- So what you're seeing today is the foundation of our plan to address these anxieties
- There's no better place to start than investing in health care—and we've invested deeply
- OHIP+ will give everyone 24 years old and under free access to prescription drugs, filling a serious gap that's been created because so many jobs no longer provide this coverage for families
- We are investing in major capital hospital projects around the province and giving a big boost to hospital operating budgets which is going to mean lower wait times
- We are also investing in education – all the way through the system
- We're creating more child care spaces and we're making university and college tuition free for 210,000 **students**
- And we are focusing on those areas that will help make life more affordable through initiatives like our Fair Housing Plan and Fair Hydro Plan
- With this balanced budget we have the freedom and flexibility to respond to the new challenges people are facing in this new world
- We must make the right choices now to support the people of Ontario as we all navigate this turbulence and set our province on a course toward long-term success
- I see this budget as the foundation for that
- There is a need for government to stand up and play an active role in building a fair society where there is more opportunity for everyone and more security too.
- We cannot be idle or complacent where it comes to our economy and to trade
- We cannot simply assume that the jobs of tomorrow will be available to **Ontarians**
- This is the time for us to be focused, fair, and bold
- To not simply describe and reassert our values, but to defend them and act on them
- That's what we've done with this budget and what you will continue to see us do over the days and months ahead

Commented [MR(1)]: Add language about support for middle class families

Commented [MR(2)]: Add opposition line from BI speech . . . others would have a different view of the role of government