

ANNOUNCEMENT COVER SHEET

\$15 MINIMUM WAGE ECHO — YWCA

WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 2017

Premier —

On Wednesday, you will visit the YWCA in Toronto to echo Tuesday's announcement of our Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Plan. The focus of this echo will be on increasing the minimum wage to \$14/hour by January 2018 and \$15/hour by January 2019. As with the Fair Hydro echo announcements, after speaking with some people impacted by the news you will deliver a few minutes of informal remarks without notes or a podium and answer media questions. Ideally your interactions at the event with people who will receive pay increases as a result of this change will give you some good content for your remarks. In addition, these cover note BPs capture some key messages for your review prior to the avail.

- Thank you, Kevin [Minister Flynn]
- I appreciate this opportunity to listen to the experiences of people who are having a hard time getting ahead in our economy and are going to benefit from a \$15 an hour minimum wage

This is a time of unprecedented technological and economic change, but I want to start today with an old idea — fairness

- Fairness is one of the earliest things we learn in life, and I would argue it's one of the most important
- In Ontario, our shared belief in fairness underpins all the progress we've made in building an inclusive, thriving province
- But we can't take fairness for granted — especially not right now

In this time of volatility and change, we have to work harder than ever to build and preserve our fair society

- And I don't think it is fair that there are people in our province working full-time who still can't afford the necessities
- It isn't fair that 30 per cent of the people who woke up to go to work today are earning less than \$15 an hour — nearly one in three workers

- It isn't fair that most of the people earning less than \$15 an hour are women
- And it is especially unfair that, as corporate profits in Ontario climb to record highs, a third of our friends, neighbours and family members are getting left behind

Putting Ontario's economy back on track after the recession was tough. But we worked hard and we did it — all of us

- Ontario's economic growth now outpaces Canada and the U.S. and unemployment is at a 16-year low
- We are again an engine of growth and a place where businesses come to prosper
- We will continue to work with businesses to make sure that we're creating the right environment so they can continue to succeed
- But we will not turn our backs on workers — we will not stand by while workers are treated unfairly
- So we have a plan for Fair Workplaces and Better Jobs — and a big part of that, of course comes down to wages

On January 1st of 2018, we are increasing Ontario's minimum wage to \$14 an hour

- Then, on January 1st 2019, the minimum wage will increase to \$15 an hour
- This is the largest increase to the minimum wage in Ontario's history
- It will be followed by annual increases at the rate inflation, so your pay cheque keeps up with the rising cost of living

This timeline also gives businesses time to plan, and it gives us time to work together and introduce new supports and measures that cut business costs in other areas

- We need to move forward in a balanced way, because we can't compromise our businesses and we can't compromise on people's right to be paid fairly
- So we will work with small businesses right across Ontario to make sure they are being supported as these changes come into effect

And I should point out that most Ontario businesses do treat their workers fairly

- They understand that what is good for employees is good for business
- And when more of our neighbours can afford to raise a family, shop at local businesses, take the family out for dinner — that creates new opportunities across our economy
- So we are taking the next steps in bringing everyone onboard as we build a fairer Ontario, with better jobs

Workers deserve a fairer share of the growth that they are helping to create

- Imagine the difference this will make in the life of someone trying to raise a family on the minimum wage...
- There are millions of people struggling to do that right now
- Next year, they are going to take home more pay — and Ontario will be an even fairer place to live, work and raise a family
- Thank you again for being here
- I am now happy to take your questions

Please let us know if you have any questions,

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