

December 14, 2017 -- Interview with Richard Brennan

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Media Prep Sheet: Toronto Storeys Influencer of the Year – Interview with Richard Brennan

Location: In Person - Your Office

Date: Thursday, December 14, 2017

Time: Briefing: 9:30-9:45 A.M.

Prepared by: Jenn Beaudry

Reviewed by: Rebecca MacKenzie

Premier,

Tomorrow you will be sitting down for a quick interview with Richard Brennan (formerly of the Star), who is writing a piece for the real estate trade publication *Toronto Storeys*.

Toronto Storeys has named you Influencer of the Year for the introduction of the Fair Housing Plan and has asked Badger to do a profile piece on you. He will be asking you basic questions about your motivation for bringing in the plan and your contributions to it.

This is a great opportunity to not only talk about the Fair Housing Plan, but also your motivation behind everything you do – creating fairness and opportunity for the people of Ontario. I have included your Fairness and Opportunity general messaging in this note. It would be great if you could expand on the housing piece to also include the other measures in your plan, like OHIP+ and Free Tuition. Again, this stresses the overarching fairness and opportunity motivation behind your work.

Badger has indicated that this will be a very positive piece with fairly light questions – Quite unlike his former Badger self.

Also included below is a little more about *Toronto Storeys* and general messaging on the Fair Housing Plan.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached at 647-299-5435.

Jenn

About Toronto Storeys

Since its launch in September 2016, Toronto Storeys has become one of the sources for news, information and insights into Toronto's real estate market. They earn approximately 2,500 views/day for our stories

(approx.. 40,000/month), with significant engagement through their social media channels (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram).

The site is primarily read by real estate insiders (developers, planners, bureaucrats, designers, architects and realtors), however, their efforts have always been to engage the public, and capture the conversations people unaffiliated with the industry are having about this crazy real estate market.

They cover new projects, policies, urban planning, finances, design, architecture, and individuals who are contributing to the local real estate market

Fair Housing Plan Messaging

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- When young people couldn't afford their own apartment or couldn't imagine ever owning a home, we knew we had a problem...
- When the rising cost of housing is making more and more people insecure about their future, we knew we had to act
- While a strong housing market was reflective of Ontario's strong economy - affordability became a real and growing concern.
- That's why we introduced the Fair Housing Plan to stabilize the market for home buyers and renters.
- Through the 16 measures we introduced we wanted to make buying and renting a home more affordable and fairer.
- We expanded rent controls to protect people against sudden, dramatic rent increases that force them out of their homes.
- We introduced a non-resident speculation tax to target wealthy people who aren't looking to live or raise a family in Ontario.
- We're investing \$125M over 5 years to encourage the construction rental apartment buildings by rebating development charges
- Making surplus government lands available for new rental and affordable housing
- And giving municipalities the ability to charge vacant property and land taxes to unlock development opportunities
- These measured set of responses are meant to ease the enormous pressure people are under right now when it comes to housing
- They're part of a balanced plan that aims to create stability and address affordability in our housing market.

- The data shows that since we've announced our plan those measures have had the desired effect

Fairness & Opportunity Messaging

You've heard a lot from us over the past several months. I've been talking about different elements of our plan to build a better Ontario and the thread that connects all of these pieces is fairness.

What I hear – no matter where I am in the province is that people are feeling uncertain about the future. They are anxious about their own jobs and about what the future holds for their kids.

Ontario's economy is in a good place – outperforming every other province in Canada. Our unemployment rate is at its lowest point in 16 years.

But there is also a lot of change and uncertainty – about the nature of work, about what's happening in the U.S. with Trump and trade, about the cost of living rising faster than people's paycheques.

It is tough for people to feel like they're getting ahead right now – and even those who do feel like they're doing OK still worry about staying ahead.

With this uncertainty, we have to protect our people as best we can.

We need to make sure that people across the province feel like they are benefitting from the strength in our economy.

We need to address the concerns of those who worry about falling behind, even as they work so hard to get ahead. To make life in Ontario fairer and create more opportunity for everyone.

You've heard me say it before. I believe government must be a force for good.

That's not a slogan – it's what drives me every single day.

We worked very hard to bring the budget to balance this year – people across the public service, across the province worked hard together to do that.

And what that balance has allowed us to do is invest in the areas that will have the biggest impact for people across the province

Free tuition for more than 200,000 students

Getting 100,000 more kids into childcare so their parents can work

Free prescription drugs for everyone under the age of 25

A pilot project to test whether a Basic Income is a fairer, more effective way of helping

people get ahead

A Fair Hydro Plan that takes 25 per cent off people's bills

A Fair Housing Plan to make buying or renting a home in Ontario more affordable

And a plan for Fair Workplaces and Better Jobs that includes raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour

All of these things are connected. The motivation behind each of them is the same.

We can do better in Ontario. We can build a province where people do feel optimistic about the future because there is security and there is opportunity.