

Fiscal Overview

Preliminary Draft for Discussion – August 4, 2017 4:30 PM

Recap on the 2017 Budget Fiscal Plan

- Provide an overview of major components in the 2017 Budget fiscal plan, the path to the balanced budget, and remaining balanced over the medium-term.

Highlight Underlying Revenue, Expense, and Prudence Risks

- Discuss potential risks to the fiscal plan, based on current information, and underlying assumptions that were made during the 2017 Budget process.

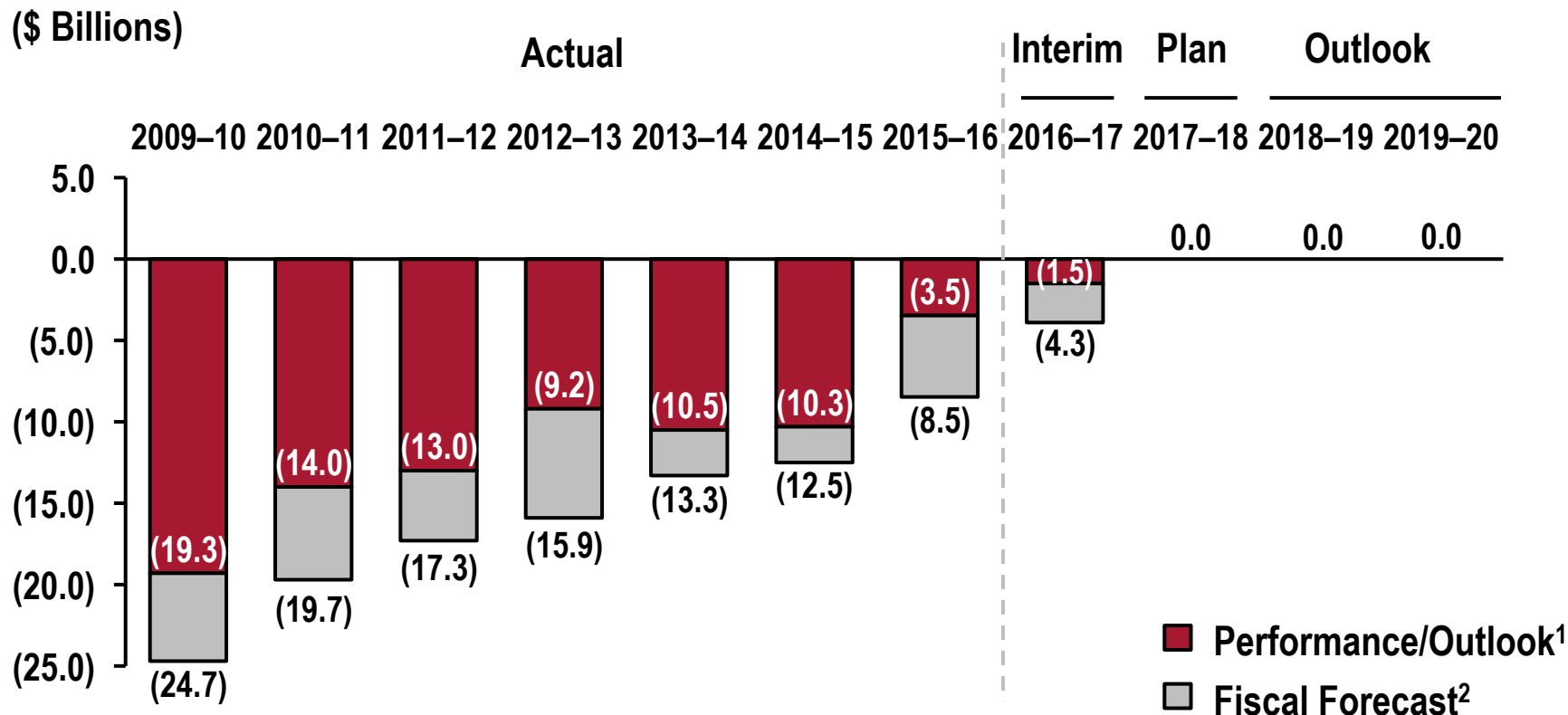
Illustrate a Risk-based Scenario of the Government's Fiscal Position

- Highlight perspectives from key stakeholders (e.g., Financial Accountability Officer, credit rating agencies, etc.) on Ontario's fiscal position.

The 2017 Budget Fiscal Plan

2017 Budget – Return to Balance

The Province is projecting a balanced budget in 2017–18 and continued balance in 2018–19 and 2019–20. By continuing to beat its fiscal targets, the government's accumulated deficit is \$29 billion lower than it otherwise would have been relative to the 2010 Budget forecast.



¹ Represents the 2017 Budget outlook for 2016–17 to 2019–20. For 2009–10 to 2015–16, actual results are presented. The 2015–16 actuals have been restated to reflect recognizing jointly sponsored net pension assets for the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union Pension Plan and the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan on the Province's financial statements, consistent with the 2016 Budget and as described in the 2016–17 Third Quarter Finances.

² Forecast for 2009–10 is based on the 2009 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review, 2010–11 to 2013–14 is based on the 2010 Budget, 2014–15 is based on the 2014 Budget, 2015–16 is based on the 2015 Budget; 2016–17 is based on the 2016 Budget.

Source: Ontario Ministry of Finance.

2017 Budget – Medium-Term Fiscal Plan

Ontario's Fiscal Plan and Outlook (\$ Billions)

	Actual	Interim	Plan	Outlook	
	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Revenue	128.4	133.2	141.7	144.9	149.3
<i>y-o-y growth</i>	8.3%	3.8%	6.3%	2.3%	3.1%
Expense					
Programs	120.9	123.5	129.5	132.3	135.8
<i>y-o-y growth</i>	2.3%	2.1%	4.8%	2.2%	2.7%
Interest on Debt ¹	11.0	11.3	11.6	12.0	12.6
<i>y-o-y growth</i>	3.1%	2.6%	2.9%	3.9%	5.0%
Total Expense	131.9	134.8	141.1	144.3	148.4
<i>y-o-y growth</i>	2.4%	2.2%	4.7%	2.3%	2.9%
Surplus/(Deficit) Before Reserve	(3.5)	(1.5)	0.6	0.6	0.9
Reserve	–	–	0.6	0.6	0.9
Surplus/(Deficit)	(3.5)	(1.5)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net Debt as a Per Cent of GDP	38.6	37.8	37.5	37.3	37.2
Accumulated Deficit as a Per Cent of GDP	25.2	24.2	23.2	22.3	21.4

¹ Interest on debt expense is net of interest capitalized during construction of tangible capital assets of \$0.2 billion in 2014–15, \$0.2 billion in 2015–16, \$0.1 billion in 2016–17, \$0.3 billion in 2017–18.

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

Supported by the outlook for continued economic growth, revenue is projected to grow by an average annual rate of **3.9%**.

Program expense is projected to grow at an average annual rate of **2.9%** - reflecting investments in priority areas such as healthcare, education, childcare expansion and electricity cost relief programs.

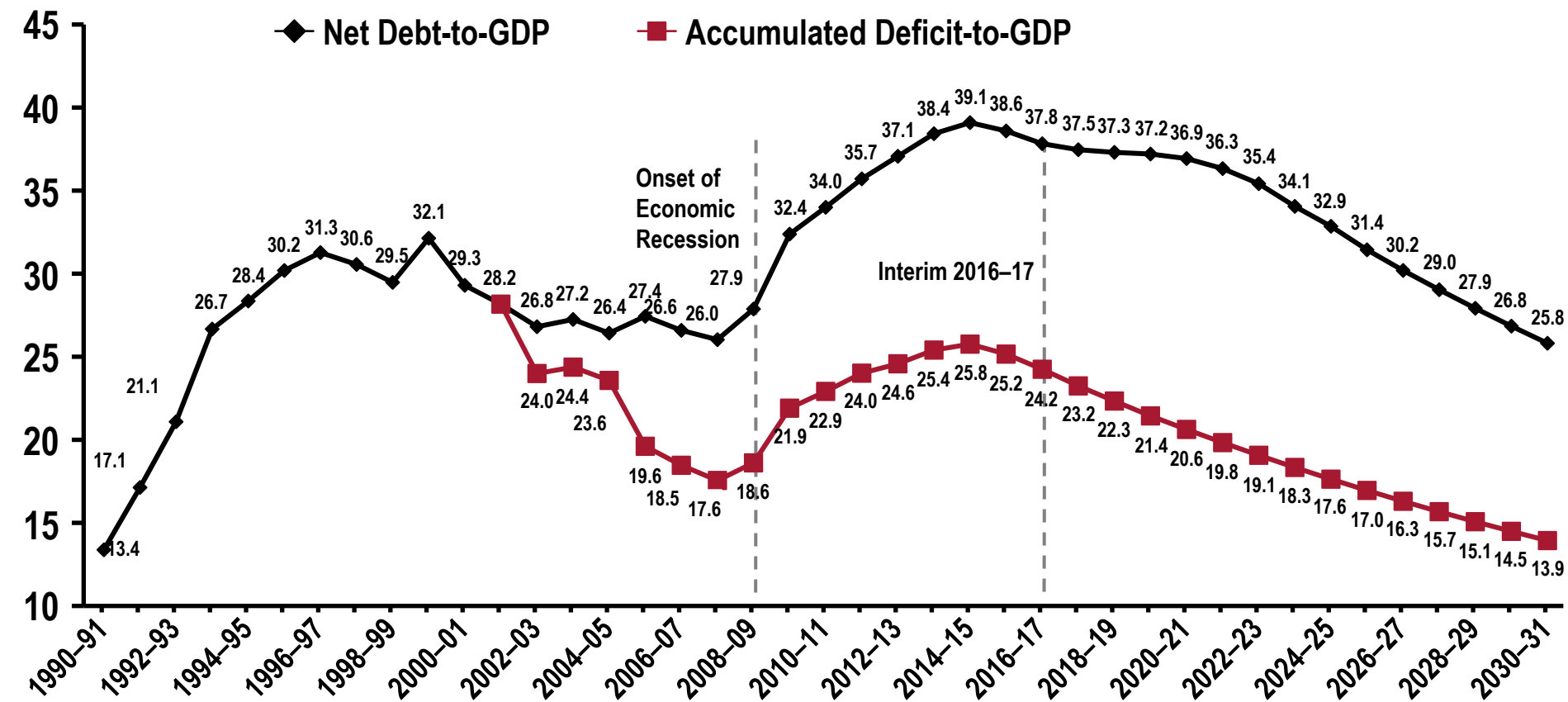
To protect the fiscal outlook against unforeseen adverse changes in revenue and expense the reserve has been set at \$0.6 billion in 2017–18 and 2018–19 and \$0.9 billion in 2019–20.

2017 Budget – Ontario's Economic Outlook

Net Debt-to-GDP and Accumulated Deficit-to-GDP

Both Net Debt-to-GDP and Accumulated Deficit-to-GDP peaked in 2014-15 and have been on a declining track.

Per Cent

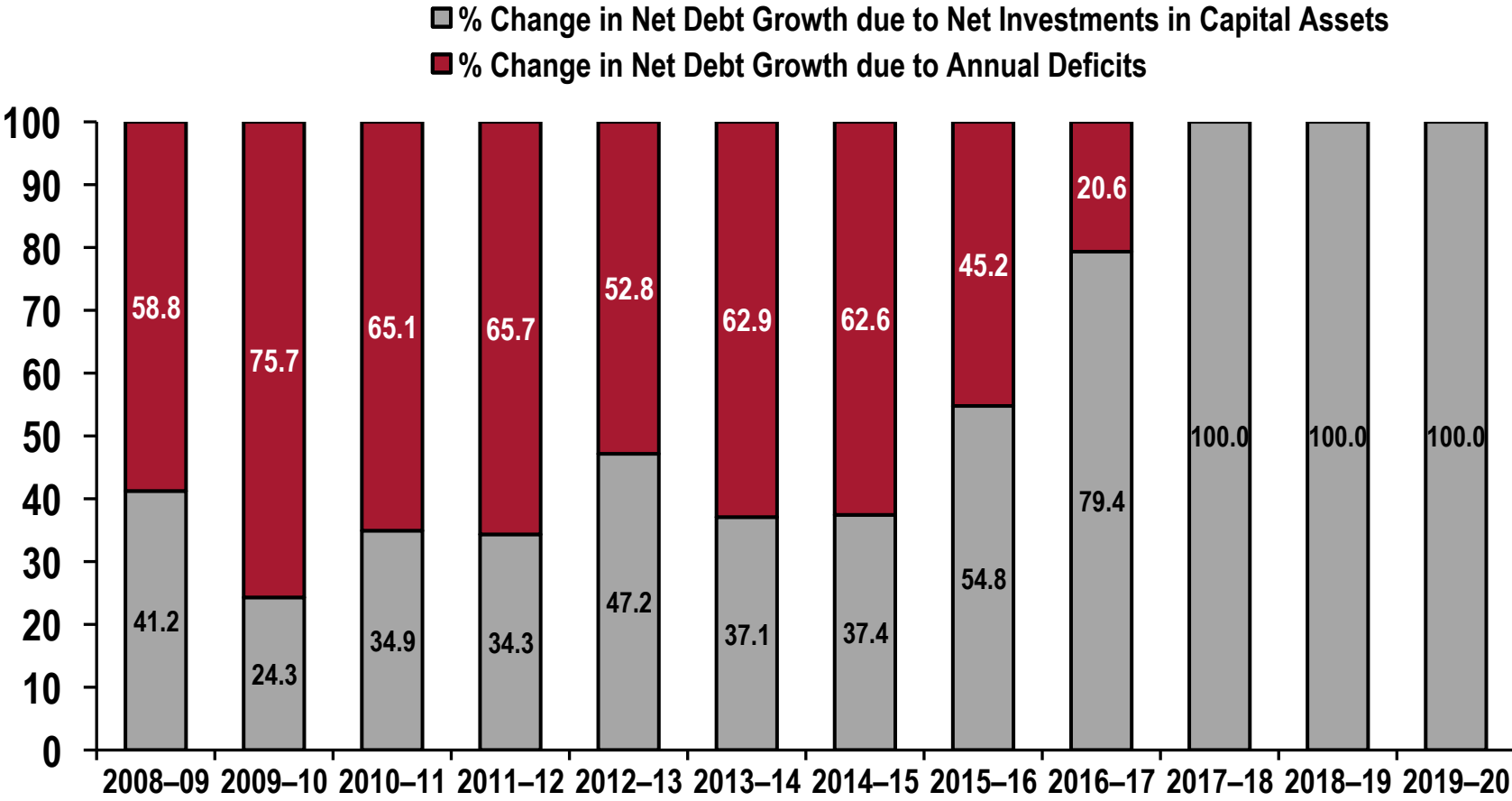


Notes: Net Debt has been restated to include Broader Public Sector Net Debt, starting in 2005-06.

Source: Ontario Ministry of Finance.

Net Debt Growth after Balance

Balanced budgets from 2017–18 onwards will ensure that the increase in net debt will be limited to the difference between cash investments in capital assets and the amortization of these investments

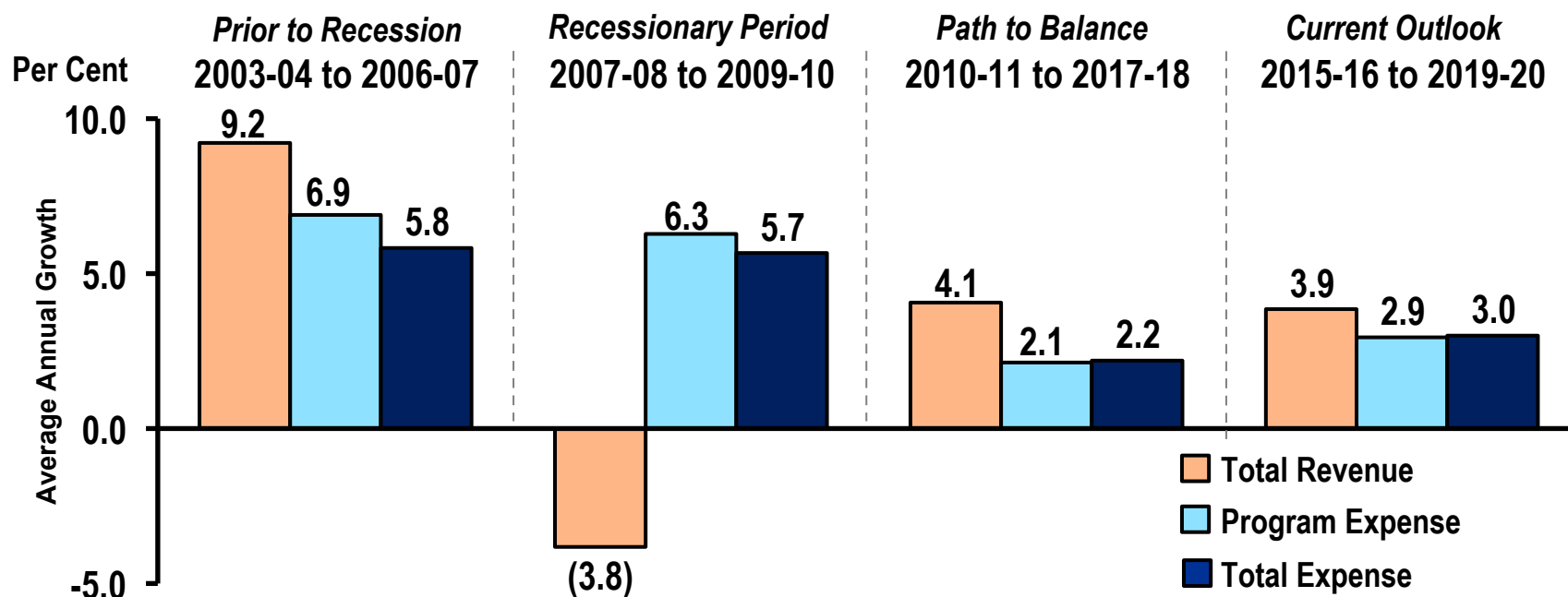


Notes: The 2015–16 actuals have been restated to reflect recognizing jointly sponsored net pension assets for the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union and the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan on the Province's financial statements, consistent with the 2016 Budget and as described in the 2016–17 Third Quarter Finances.
Source: Ontario Financing Authority.

Underlying Assumptions and Risks

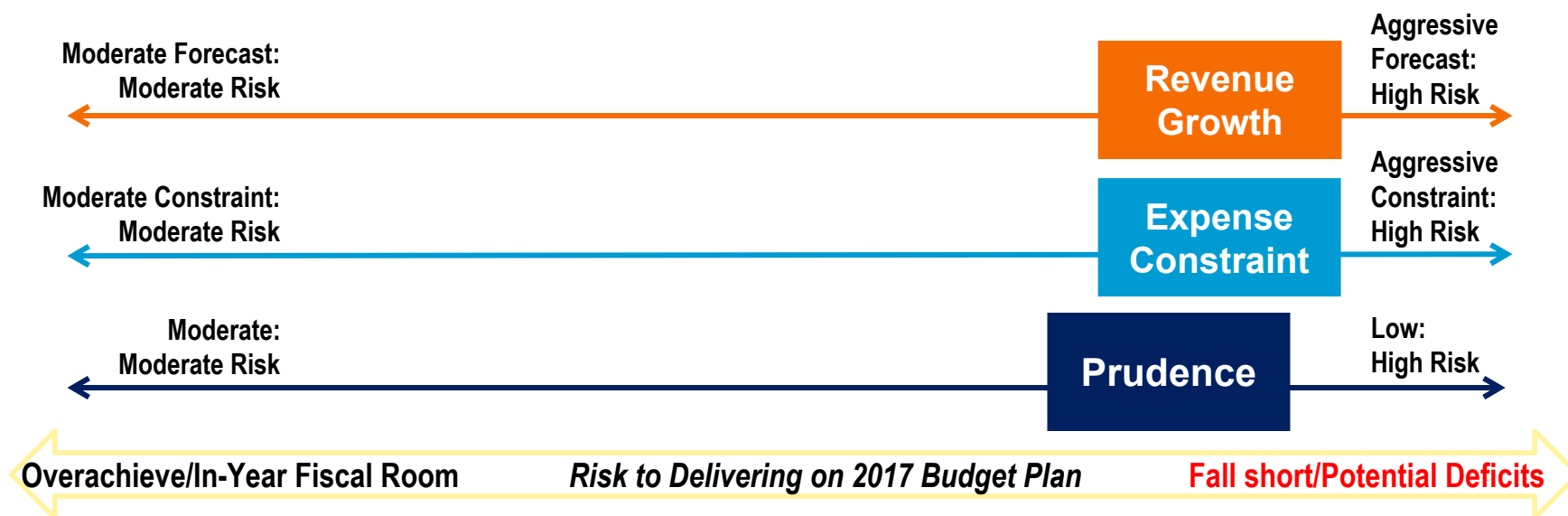
2017 Budget – Average Growth in Revenue and Expense

- Prior to the recession, revenue growth significantly exceeded program expense growth. However, during the recession, real GDP in Ontario declined at a faster pace than in the rest of Canada causing significant declines in revenue, while the pace of spending remained consistent, leading to deficits.
- Over the path to restoring fiscal balance, **the government managed growth in program spending to an average annual rate of 2.1 per cent**, through measures such as compensation restraint and transformation measures to improve efficiency and value for money. Over this period, program expense grew at a rate below the sum of inflation and population growth. Low interest rates also helped the government achieve its fiscal targets.
- Over the medium-term, program expense is expected to grow more in line with population and inflation growth, and revenue growth is expected to be roughly in line with nominal GDP.



2017 Budget – Underlying Fiscal Architecture

- While the 2017 Budget fiscal plan delivers on a published balanced budget, the underlying fiscal architecture and assumptions are strained – making the plan vulnerable to critique and risk.
 - The government will be scrutinized/questioned** on the reasonableness of revenue assumptions and robustness of expenditure management plans.
 - This risk is heightened in areas where potential impacts can be predicted**, but are not being reflected.
- It is also important to note that this fiscal architecture mix **runs the risk of not being able to adjust to adverse events post-Budget**– providing limited room for error, reduced flexibility for unforeseen (or known downside risks) and potential further investments.
- A robust **post-Budget implementation plan and in-year expenditure management strategy** will be required.



2017 Budget – Economic Risks

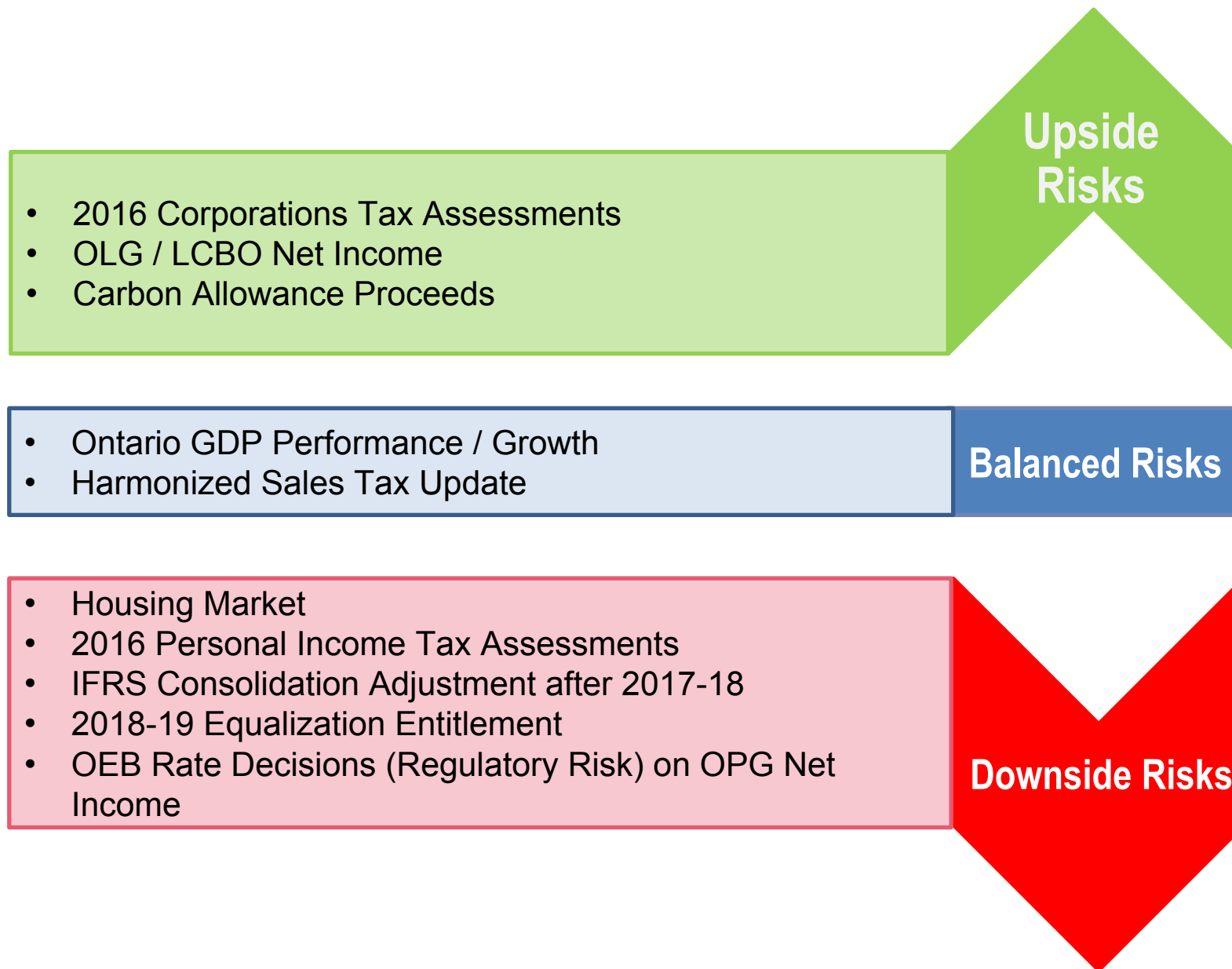
- US growth
- Rest of Canada growth
- Exports
- Infrastructure spending
- Household spending

**Upside
Potential**

Downside Risks

- Geopolitical uncertainty
- Trade protectionism
- Elevated household debt
- Rising interest rates
- Financial markets
- Housing

2017 Budget – Revenue Risks



2017 Budget – Expense Risks

Program Expense Risks

- The current program expense allocation provided to Ministries includes funding to address many government priority initiatives.
- However, some program expense pressures are being risk managed outside the fiscal plan, including:

Forecast and Compensation Risks

- Increased **OSAP uptake** resulting from the Student Financial Assistance program redesign, which will make average tuition free for eligible students with family incomes of \$50,000 or less.
- Demand for mandated **Social Assistance** programs, primarily due to caseload and cost per case growth in the Ontario Disability Support Program.
- Potential pressures related to upcoming negotiations with the Ontario Medical Association regarding **Physician Services Payments**.
- **Resource Revenue Sharing** agreements and settling **land claims with Indigenous communities** in Ontario, which will depend on progress in negotiations and decisions about appropriate accounting treatment for each settlement.

Program Implementation and Policy Risks

- Additional funding to support **Child Care Expansion**, to achieve the commitment to create 100,000 new spaces.
- Funding to support **Corrections and Police Oversight Reform**, informed by the Sapers and Tulloch recommendations.

2017 Budget – Other Expense Risks and Prudence

Other Expense Risks and Prudence

- During the period of deficit reduction, prudence was used to help overachieve on fiscal targets and help manage against lower than forecast revenue, or expense risks that could not be mitigated.
- Prudence has been reduced in almost every area of the fiscal plan – higher savings to be achieved ('negative prudence') and lower Contingency Funds and Reserves.
 - The 2017 Budget includes a smaller 2017-18 **Contingency Fund** (\$615 million) compared to 2016-17 (\$1.2 billion). These reduced contingencies limit flexibility to respond to changing needs and to help mitigate expense risks that may otherwise adversely affect Ontario's fiscal performance.
 - The 2017 Budget plan also includes a **Year End Savings target** of \$1.2 billion in 2017-18, which is required to achieve the program expense outlook published in the 2017 Budget. Previously, targets have been achieved through in-year expenditure management and underspending due to factors such as program management and changes in project implementation plans.
 - The 2017 Budget plan also includes a **Program Review Savings Target** of \$750 million in 2018-19. The 2017 Budget highlighted that the Province would expand the review of current programs to identify opportunities for modernization.
 - The **Reserve** now reflects the underlying surplus embedded in the fiscal plan, and thereby represents fiscal room against a balanced budget target.

Ontario's Debt Ratings and Sensitivities

Credit rating agencies

- Credit rating agencies have Ontario's credit ratings on stable outlook. The rating agencies have noted that risks to the credit profile include Ontario's after-capital deficit, high debt burden, elevated household debt, the housing market and a potential rapid increase in interest rates.

Agency	Long-Term Rating	Short-Term Rating	Most Recent Review
Moody's	Aa2	P-1	Negative Outlook removed on April 26, 2016
DBRS	AA (low)	R-1 (mid)	Confirmed June 28, 2017
Fitch	AA-	F1+	Confirmed June 20, 2017
S&P	A+	A-1	Long-term rating confirmed; short-term rating lowered June 15, 2017

Sensitivities to Interest on Debt and Net Debt-to-GDP

- The Bank of Canada recently raised interest rates. IOD expense could exceed the forecast if rates are higher than the interest rate forecast used in the 2017 Budget.
- For every \$1 billion increase in borrowing, IOD could increase by \$30 million.
- Every 1 per cent change in GDP impacts the net debt-to-GDP ratio by ~0.5 per cent.

2017 Budget – Illustrative Risk-based Scenarios

- The 2017 Budget fiscal plan includes economic, revenue, and expense pressures in all sectors.
- In its Spring report, the **Financial Accountability Office (FAO)** provided their assessment of the government's outlook, should some risks materialize. The FAO's projection included their own forecast for revenue and interest on debt, and adopted the program expense outlook from the *2017 Budget*, but adjusted program expense to include the impact of the Auditor General's Pension Asset accounting treatment. This FAO projection leads to a deterioration to the deficit beyond 2017-18.
 - Furthermore, the FAO recently released a statement supporting a Fraser Institute report (released in August 2017), which argued that the government's plan to lower its net debt-to-GDP ratio is overly optimistic.
- The **Auditor General** is not expected to support the government's position on the Pension Asset accounting treatment and will likely give a qualified opinion of the 2016-17 Public Accounts.

FAO Analysis

