



**Better For People,  
Smarter For Business**





## A Message From The Minister

# Building on our Strengths

We have a lot going for us here in Ontario. This is the best place anywhere to raise a family, open and run a business and pursue new opportunities to make dreams a reality.

We're home to some of the best educational institutions anywhere. We have "Made in Ontario" companies bringing our ingenuity to the world. Most of all, we have dynamic, innovative and hardworking people. We're building on our strengths to make Ontario Open for Business, Open for Jobs.

But for all that's right about Ontario, hardworking families and job-creating businesses are telling us that Ontario's regulatory burden is weighing them down.

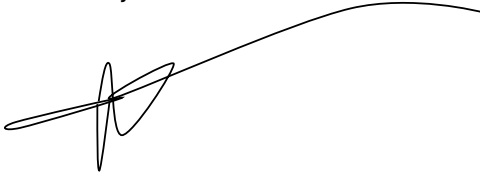
The good news is, our government has a plan to make Ontario work better for people, and smarter for business. And it starts with empowering people and getting out of the way of business to let them do what they do best — create jobs and opportunity for hardworking families.

The work my ministry is doing is part of our government's wider approach to making Ontario all that it can and should be. It's centred around a plan to build Ontario, together. It's about delivering smarter government for the people of Ontario with a modern, outcome-focused approach to service. It's about realizing the full potential of workers and businesses to grow our economy by creating a more competitive environment for them to flourish and put our people to work.

Reducing Ontario's regulatory burden is an important part of our government's plan because getting this right matters to families, businesses and Ontario's bottom line. Our government created the Ministry of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction for this very purpose. The regulatory knot that was stifling economic growth in Ontario wasn't tied overnight — untying it carefully and effectively will take time and persistence. As Associate Minister, I see it as job number one to bring regulatory relief to everyday people and the businesses they rely on to get ahead.

Building on our successes over the past year, *The Better For People, Smarter For Business Act, 2019* is the latest in a series of red tape reduction measures that will continue to deliver meaningful results for Ontario — unburdening business, bringing new opportunities, and setting us up for success in years to come.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria,**  
Associate Minister for Small Business  
and Red Tape Reduction

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**As Associate Minister, I see it as job number one to bring regulatory relief to everyday people and the businesses they rely on to get ahead.**

A man and a woman are looking at a laptop screen. The man is in the background, wearing a blue shirt, and the woman is in the foreground, wearing glasses and a white top. They are both smiling and appear to be working together. The background is slightly blurred, showing shelves with books or supplies.

Making Ontario

# Better for People and Smarter for Business

**There is a real need for meaningful change when it comes to reducing the regulatory burden in Ontario.**

Before we were elected over a year and a half ago, there hadn't been significant progress in over a decade. As a result, our province is saddled with unnecessary, and often outdated, rules and regulations that get in the way of business and prevent our communities and families from thriving.



Effective regulations ensure we have strong rules in place to protect us and our environment — at work, at home and at play. That's why as we work to ease the regulatory burden, we are doing so in a meticulous way to ensure that health, safety and environmental protections are maintained or enhanced where necessary.

Ineffective regulations are ones that serve no purpose yet cost people and businesses valuable time and money. Perhaps they served a purpose in 1950, but simply haven't kept up to date. In other cases, regulations that were meant to apply in one situation have led to unintentional consequences.



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Today, soup kitchens and other community feeding programs must comply with rules and regulations for equipment, infrastructure and food handling that are comparable to rules for full-service food restaurant chains and large institutional kitchens. Organizations that are busy helping those less fortunate don't always have the resources to jump through hoops and decipher which rules apply to them, and which do not — nor should they have to.

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A grocer must pay careful attention to where bananas are located in the store, because if they're sold in the ready-to-eat section, an inspector may force them to label that banana with either a calorie count sticker or nutritional facts table.

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With advancements and improvements to vehicle standards, we made driving in Ontario work better for families by ending the costly Drive Clean program. Now, we're focused on making driving more efficient for Ontario's hardworking professional truck drivers.

Each year, Ontario trucks must complete multiple inspections in order to operate on our roadways. The Ministry of Transportation first requires an annual safety inspection, which can take up to three hours. Following the safety inspection, transport trucks are then subject to emissions testing by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to ensure they are meeting Ontario's high environmental standards. Both tests are important. But doing them separately makes no sense and takes Ontario transport trucks off the road when they could be out delivering made-in-Ontario goods.



## **These are some of the types of unnecessary and outdated regulations we're working on removing, streamlining or clarifying.**

In the case of the “arbitrary banana rule,” it's clear that some of our regulations aren't clear or just don't make sense. For professional truck drivers, a single test is simply less time consuming and more cost effective. And as for our soup kitchens — well, we just have an obligation to do better.

That's why we're looking at making the necessary changes that will help our businesses, help our communities, and set Ontario up for success.

We're looking for red tape that's holding businesses and people back from achieving their full potential — because in far too many cases onerous, unnecessary rules are deterring investment, deferring dreams and putting people out of business.

We're taking a whole-of-government approach to getting out of the way of business success. We want to create a competitive business climate that attracts investment, grows our economy and makes Ontario Open for Business and Open for Jobs.

A smiling woman with brown hair, wearing a blue denim shirt and a dark apron, stands next to a window with a blue frame. A green and blue 'OPEN' sign hangs from the window. The background is dark and out of focus.

# Our Guiding Principles

**For the last year and a half, we've been working to restore the competitive advantage that helped make Ontario the economic engine of Canada.**

We're taking a thoughtful, targeted approach to eliminating unnecessary red tape in Ontario. Each decision we make is informed by the following five guiding principles:

# 1

## Protecting Health, Safety and the Environment

Change is necessary, but not if it's just for the sake of change itself. We're not trying to fix what isn't broken. Many regulations are in place for very good reasons — like protecting our drinking water and keeping workers safe on the job. We've set our sights on the red tape that's dragging people and businesses down. That's why as we work to ease the regulatory burden, we are doing so in a smart, careful way to ensure that health, safety and environmental protections are maintained or enhanced.

# 2

## Prioritizing the Important Issues — Even if They're Tough

Fixing Ontario's bloated and broken regulatory framework is a big job — but it's a necessary one. As we work to deliver smarter government for the province, we are carefully assessing which regulations cost people and business the most time and money while looking for innovative, modern ways to ensure these rules are as effective and efficient as possible.

# 3

## Harmonizing Rules with Ottawa and Other Provinces Where We Can

We know how hard it is to start and run a business. It's complex enough without having to figure out how to jump through unnecessary regulatory hoops. There are few things more frustrating than spending the time to comply with federal regulatory requirements, only to be asked to do the same thing slightly differently to satisfy provincial requirements. That's why we're targeting duplicative red tape and aligning where we can — to eliminate those steps that cost job-creators time and money while providing no value to the people of Ontario.



# 4

## Listening to You

Whether you're a business owner or an everyday Ontarian who cares about making Ontario work better, we're listening. We want to hear from you about what we can do to remove red tape and create the right conditions for businesses and communities to prosper.

# 5

## Whole-of-Government Approach

Regulations don't just fall under one ministry — they span the entire government. That's why we're taking a highly coordinated approach and making sure everyone is on the same page when it comes to our red tape reduction strategy. Approaching this with a whole-of-government perspective fits with our mission to deliver smarter government for Ontario with the economic growth to match — so we can build Ontario, together.







## Making Ontario **Work Better for You**

### **Time is one of our most precious and finite resources.**

We've all spent hours standing in endless lines to get a document replaced or a licence renewed. While 82 per cent of customers accessing in-person health card, licence and vital events services are assisted in less than 20 minutes, that doesn't account for the time to get to a centre, find parking or exit public transit, and then make your way home. That time can be better spent with family, on the job, or simply doing the things we enjoy.

By digitizing the relationship between Ontarians and their government services, we're working to save valuable time and money every single day. In 2018-19, 92 per cent of Ontarians went online to access birth certificate services. That means over 317,000 people were able to complete this vital service, on their schedule and at a time that was most convenient to them.

Since the launch of the new Fish and Wildlife Licensing Service last year, nearly half of all Ontarians who purchase hunting and fishing licences have chosen to do so from the comfort of home, saving themselves countless hours by not having to drive to their nearest licence issuer or wait in line.



## Making Ontario Work Better for You

# Actions to Date

**Reducing Ontario's regulatory burden is not just about helping people at work, it's also about helping them in their everyday life by freeing them to make choices that suit them.**

### Freezing Workplace Safety and Insurance Board rates for not-for-profits

Ontario's not-for-profit organizations, like food banks, daycares and soup kitchens, do a great deal of good in communities across the province — so it's essential that we help them help others. That's why we announced a freeze on workplace safety insurance rate increases for not-for-profit organizations, enabling them to focus their resources on the good work that they do.

### Increasing the scope of pharmacists

Ontario's pharmacists are highly skilled. In April 2019, to help free up our doctors and nurse practitioners to care for more complex patient needs and to save families time in multiple waiting rooms, we committed to expanding the scope of pharmacists to treat minor ailments by prescribing and administering certain drugs and renewing certain prescriptions for up to one year.





## Letting kids be kids

We've expanded authorized recreational programs that operate before or after school to include children aged four and five, not just children aged six and up, by amending the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. This simple change provides access to programming for up to three hours a day — making life easier for parents, especially those re-entering the workplace.

## Electronic Proof of Insurance and Free Licence Status Checks

We carry banking information, travel plans, and everything in between on our smartphones. We announced in September 2019 that Ontario drivers would be able to carry proof of insurance on their smartphones. Consumers now have the option of keeping an electronic insurance card on their mobile device instead of, or in addition to, a paper version. We also modernized the online Driver's Licence Check Service and made it free for drivers to be able to check the status of their licences before getting behind the wheel.

## Standardizing Recycling

In August, our government announced that we would transfer the Blue Box program to producer responsibility and make it more consistent. When you're ready to dispose of your coffee cup and its lid, you will know where to put them — whether you're at home in Brampton, at work in Toronto or with the family at Science North in Sudbury. Right now, a paper coffee cup goes in the garbage in Toronto, but in the green bin in Hamilton and the blue bin in Markham. We're working to have one standard across the province and simplify recycling rules to make it easier and more efficient to process our waste.



# Making Ontario Work Better for You

## What We're Doing

***The Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, 2019* will continue our sensible approach to fixing what's wrong with government regulation.**

By helping charitable organizations help others. By giving you faster access to life-saving medicine. By letting you bring Rex out for brunch with you on your favourite patio. And much more.

**Getting out of the way of community feeding organizations, religious charities and food banks that are doing good work in our communities**

Community feeding organizations, which may include food banks and religious charities, are committed to serving others and feeding the less fortunate among us. Currently, Ontario doesn't distinguish between full-service chain restaurants and the various not-for-profit soup kitchens, before and after school programs and new and innovative food rescue and delivery organizations.

As a result, these charitable organizations are left with a confusing and convoluted set of rules through which to navigate. They're forced to spend needless hours trying to understand what applies to them and what doesn't so they can continue their good work in our communities.

To better help them help others, Ontario is launching a consultation to create a separate, tailored set of requirements for these organizations, protecting public health and safety while ensuring that they can focus on feeding those in need rather than spending their time and money complying with the full range of regulatory requirements that apply to other food premises.



## Allowing restaurants and breweries to decide whether to allow dogs on their patios

Ontarians love their pets. But today, pet owners are not allowed to bring their dogs with them onto restaurant patios, unless they are service animals, which means business owners miss out on potential customers.

They are also not allowed to bring them to a brewery where only beverages, low-risk and/or pre-packaged foods are served. Dog owners know how frustrating this can be — especially since dining rules in other parts of Canada, like New Brunswick and B.C. are more relaxed (not to mention other parts of the world like Paris, Tokyo, London and New York City).

That's why we're proposing to ease the restrictions and enable food premises operators to decide whether to allow dogs in outdoor eating areas, like patios, and inside food premises where only beverages, pre-packaged and/or low risk foods are served. At the same time, the Ministry of Health will develop an education and awareness campaign to ensure business owners and public health inspectors are aware of these changes. It will mean more business for those who serve food and make it easier for dog owners to enjoy a meal when they are out with family and their furry best friend.





## **Safeguarding our environment and protecting public health by creating strong, clear penalties for environmental violations**

Ontario is blessed with some of the most breathtaking natural landscapes anywhere in Canada. We care about our waterways, farmlands, food quality, and the air we breathe. Our government is committed to safeguarding our environment and protecting public health for future generations.

That's why we're protecting what matters most by expanding the use of monetary penalties for environmental violations to hold polluters accountable, as committed to in our Made-In-Ontario Environment Plan.

The broader use of strong monetary penalties will allow the government to take strong action against illegal activity, protect our environment, and level the playing field for responsible businesses.

We are also proposing the launch of a new program, modeled on the Ontario Community Environment Fund, which will reinvest any collected penalties into local communities to fund environmental initiatives. This will support key priorities in the Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan to protect and preserve our air, land, water and parks.







## **Protecting seniors and families from drug shortages and reducing burdens on drug manufacturers to help expand access to lower-cost generic-like drugs**

Ontario is home to many prescription drug manufacturers, who make significant investments to bring new drugs to market. Certain regulations and requirements have resulted in unnecessary burdens for drug manufacturers and pharmacists and make it more difficult for Ontario to provide seniors and families access to the drug products they need.

Based on the advice of drug manufacturers, pharmacists, and the Auditor General of Ontario, the government is creating the right conditions for businesses to thrive by modernizing requirements to align Ontario's requirements with national processes, those in other provinces and territories, and the private sector.

Among the benefits, these changes will help to bring lower-cost generic medications to market in Ontario and nationally and help us respond to unmet needs in the event of potential drug shortages in the province.



## **Supporting Ontario's colleges and universities in preparing students to meet labour market demands**

We have some of the best educational institutions in the world, and some of the brightest students to fill them. Ontario is streamlining the process to review and approve new postsecondary programs and degrees to make it easier for universities and colleges to train students for jobs in high-demand and emerging fields.

Ontario is ending duplicative efforts between the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Ontario's quality assurance bodies and postsecondary institutions and making program approvals faster. These actions will speed up the review and approval process to help institutions offer new programs faster to meet job-market demands.

Currently, Ontario's approval process for new programs and degrees can take up to two years, delaying when graduates reach the labour market. These changes will significantly reduce this approval timeline to three to six months, helping young people to train for high-demand and emerging jobs.

## **Empowering people to take greater control of their energy usage**

Many people would benefit if they could better assess whether their usage is higher, lower, or in line with their neighbours. There's no better way to take control of our in-home energy usage, and bring down costs, than by monitoring our use.

That's why we're currently exploring potential costs of expanding Green Button – Connect My Data to give Ontarians more choice and flexibility, including the ability to monitor their energy usage and make better choices about their energy usage.

This initiative is part of our ongoing efforts to respond to consumer demands, promote innovation in the sector, help the environment and drive energy savings.





# Making Ontario **Work Smarter for Business**

**When we were elected, we made a commitment to the people of Ontario: to create good jobs and send the message that the province is Open for Business once again.**

That's why we're working hard to make sure job creators aren't weighed down by over-regulation that stifles investment and opportunity.

This is an important part of our plan to improve Ontario's business investment climate, so we can compete on the global stage. Ontario companies need an efficient, workable regulatory framework.



# What We've Done

Numbers at a Glance (June 2018-19)

ABOUT

**\$126 million**

in net savings to business by cutting red tape

**\$160 million**

in reduced fees, charges and levies to business

**\$52 million**

in expected reduced costs from the  
*Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, 2019*, and  
from regulatory and policy changes

TO DATE

**\$338 million**

in reduced costs to  
business since June 2018

TARGET

**\$400 million**

in reduced costs to  
business by June 2020

Since June 2018, employment in Ontario has risen by

**272,400**



Ontario is a role model in reducing the regulatory burden on businesses. I am impressed by the government's leadership in making regulation more agile by applying a small business lens and taking a lighter touch to enforcing regulations. We need to take this approach across Canada."

**Dominic Barton**

Global Managing Partner  
Emeritus at management  
consultancy McKinsey &  
Company

Our government has introduced more than 100 concrete changes to make it easier for businesses to create jobs and connect with hardworking Ontarians ready to fill them. These actions have reduced business costs, harmonized regulatory requirements with other provinces and American states, ended duplication and successfully reduced barriers to investment.

## Making Ontario Work Smarter for Business

# Actions to Date



### Pausing the minimum wage hike

By pausing an increase in the minimum wage, we gave small businesses a chance to reassess their resources and their labour costs. This will help secure Ontario's competitive edge, spur overall investment and economic expansion and create more employment opportunities.

### Focusing on the skilled trades and apprenticeship

We know that one of the biggest concerns of business is access to qualified, trained talent, particularly in the skilled trades. That's why we moved quickly to adjust apprentice to journeyperson ratios to 1:1, allowing more people to enter the workforce as highly skilled and much-needed specialized tradespeople. We have also appointed special advisors to advise the government on modernizing its skilled trades and apprenticeship system to give workers in the skilled trades greater opportunities for success.



## Property Tax Review

A well-functioning property tax system is critical to supporting local services and public education while also ensuring that Ontario remains competitive. As announced in the 2019 Budget, the government is conducting a review of the property tax system and seeking input on measures to enhance the accuracy and stability of property assessments as well as promote business competitiveness through improvements to Ontario's property tax system.

## Stuffed with savings

We removed all Ontario-specific licensing and regulatory requirements for upholstered and stuffed articles in favour of federal regulations — for everything from sleeping bags and furniture to teddy bears. This reduces a long-standing burden on business and eliminates costly trade barriers. Industry sources estimate this change could save businesses \$20 million annually.



## What We're Doing

**Today, we're building on our success and addressing areas that matter most to businesses for improving the investment climate here in Ontario.**

We are ending duplication and wasted time and money in our transportation, waste management, agrifood, and manufacturing industries, while creating certainty in our resource sectors and reducing burdens across the board.



### **Creating a one-stop shop for annual transport truck safety and emissions inspections**

Each year, Ontario trucks must complete multiple inspections to ensure that they are meeting Ontario's high environmental standards and safety requirements. These inspections are important, so we are creating a one-stop approach — one place, one test, one result — for trucking companies to complete annual safety inspection and emissions testing.

The new, enhanced program for heavy-duty vehicle emissions tests will be combined with Ontario's existing commercial motor vehicle safety inspection program in 2021.

Completing both tests at the same time will save truckers time and money so they can focus on keeping goods moving across Ontario, while maintaining the necessary protections for our environment and safety.



## Streamlining approvals in the forestry industry

Ontario's forest industry generates over \$16 billion in revenue and supports approximately 155,000 direct and indirect jobs across the province. Ontario is also recognized as an innovator and sustainable forestry leader in this global industry.

As it stands today, all forestry work schedules must be approved, even though they are consistent with the approved forest management plan. This causes unnecessary delays, and in some cases forces the industry to halt operations until they've received the green light for planned operations that haven't changed from the approved forest management plan.

That's why our government is committed to supporting the sector, and the tens of thousands of jobs this renewable resource provides, by streamlining the approvals process for forest operations.

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## **Providing certainty in the mining industry legislating a requirement to file or return a closure plan amendment within 45 days**

Our mining sector contributes billions of dollars to Ontario's economy and provides tens of thousands of direct and indirect jobs. Uncertainty and open-ended timelines have been making it harder for Ontario mining operations to compete on the global stage.

That's why we're working to ensure business certainty in the mining industry to attract new global investment, expand the industry and create new jobs.

Our legislative changes would require the Director of Mine Rehabilitation to make a decision to file or return a Closure Plan Amendment 45 days after submission, ensuring government fulfills its responsibilities in a timely manner.

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## **Reducing burden on local pharmacists by digitizing drug reports**

Ontario community pharmacists are required to manually fill out paperwork for some prescriptions that were never picked up by patients. Digitizing this paperwork will save time and money and allow pharmacists to focus on service and care.



## **Modernizing rules for barbers and hairdressers**

Today in Ontario, businesses offering personal services to Ontarians are required to have a dedicated sink for cleaning their tools and to keep a record of the name and contact information of all their customers. This makes sense for tattoo artists and tanning salons.

But to barbers and hairdressers, this represents a burden with no benefit. That's why we're making changes that would make it easier for our community barbers and hairdressers to do business and reduce the need for the people of Ontario to share their personal contact information for something as routine as a haircut.

# Starting with the End Goal in Mind

We've been listening to the people of Ontario — from families to community organizations to job-creating businesses. We're taking in the common sense concerns they are raising and applying them in our mission of reducing Ontario's red tape burden.

Our regulatory vision is one in which people are better served by local and provincial government; businesses are unshackled to do what they do best — create jobs; and municipalities are focused on building and investing in their communities and delivering efficient, effective services to Ontario families.

Creating a regulatory system that works better for people and smarter for business is an important part of our Plan to Build Ontario Together.







For more information, visit:

**Ontario.ca**