



1 Dundas Street West, Suite 2500

Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Z3

Tel: (416) 646-0513

Fax: (416) 979-4627

www.omssa.com

Information Alert

Government Reset with Speech from the Throne Includes Promise of 100,000 Child Care Spaces

September 13, 2016

The 2016 fall session of Ontario's Legislature was opened September 12, 2016, with the Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell delivering Premier Kathleen Wynne's [Speech from the Throne](#).

The Speech outlined eight priority areas for the government, with emphasis on addressing Ontarian's concern with rising hydro costs.

Of interest to OMSSA members, the Throne Speech contained the government's commitment to 100,000 new child care spaces within the next five years.

The government's top priorities remain job creation, economic growth and, despite increased program costs of up to \$4.75 billion, a balanced budget by next year.

The Throne Speech, entitled: "*A Balanced Plan to Build Ontario Up for Everyone*," highlighted the government's path to balance by not cutting its way to balance, preserving services Ontarians rely on while helping manage everyday life.

8 Priorities:

1. A promise to create 100,000 new licensed child care spaces within five years, starting in 2017. This would double the province's current capacity. The new spaces will cost the province between \$1-3 billion in capital funds, as well as \$600-\$750 million in operating costs.
2. Investments in education and schools, largely restating capital investments and programs such as the Youth Job Strategy and the Ontario Student Grant.

3. Not new to OMSSA members, the government emphasized its commitment to skills and job training.
4. Investment in health care, including access to public health, investments in hospitals and indigenous health.
5. Recommitting to \$160 billion in roads, transit and modern infrastructure. This includes 5,000 kilometres of roads to be built or repaved, as well as 750 bridges to be built, repaired or rebuilt. Almost half of these roads and 200 of these bridges will be in Northern Ontario. In terms of transit, the government restated its commitment to invest in regional and local light rapid transit.
6. Build a competitive business environment through continued investment in the green economy, trade missions, reducing red tape and agriculture as examples.
7. Improving retirement income security by taking a national leadership role on the issue and citing recent federal improvements.
8. Electricity/hydro rebates: The government will introduce legislation this fall to provide residential, farm and small business electricity ratepayers with a rebate equivalent to the provincial portion of the HST, beginning January 2017. The eight per cent rebate will save the average customer approximately \$130 per year and will cost the government approximately \$1 billion per year.

Eligible rural residents will receive "additional relief" in the form of a \$35 monthly benefit, resulting in a total savings of \$540 per year, or 20 per cent off their current bills. The government will also expand the Industrial Conservation Initiative program, which provides medium and large-sized companies with financial incentives to use electricity during off-peak hours.

Debate on the Speech from the Throne begins today. OMSSA will advise members of details that emerge particularly in the area of the child care commitments and implications and opportunities for OMSSA members.

For more information please contact:

Petra Wolfbeiss
Executive Director

416-795-1514

pwolfbeiss@omssa.com