

**2015 Ontario Budget Lock-Up and Presentations: Minister of Finance
In Attendance: Olutoyin Oyelade, Casa Foundation**

Summary: Highlights and Questions to Ministerial Team by CasaFoundation

A four-pronged approach to Building Ontario Up.

1. Building modern infrastructure through the Moving Ontario Forward (MOF)
2. Creating Jobs & Growth
3. investing in Talents & Skills
4. innovative & Dynamic Business environment
5. Others: Climate change, securing retirement, reducing poverty & sexual harassment
Pan-Para pan games happening in 40 locations across ON-worth 26k jobs, \$3.7b GDP

1. Through the MOF plan ON government will spend 130b over 10 years on roads, bridges, transit. This produces annual 110 jobs.

Funds will be raised from 7.5 cents of gas tax, net revenue from toll roads, FG funds
Proceeds of divestment from government asset sales such as GM into Trillium trust to fund

A. \$31.5b dedicated to roads, public transit, rail, and transportation over 10 years in GTHA

B. \$11b in capital grants to schools over 10 years for new & existing schools.

C. \$11b in Healthcare & Social infra over 10 years to provide adequate healthcare infrastructure.

2. Creating Jobs by Partnering with Small Business

For Businesses-Increase Regional Trade

A. Increase Job Prosperity Fund (JFP) by \$200m to \$2.7 over 10 years and extend funding eligibility to new sectors that include forestry.

B. Reduce business regulatory requirements by 17% to ease cost of doing business

C. Support sectors such as biotech, forestry, technology, life sciences & manufacturing

3. Invest in Talents & Skills

A. Plan to use the Canada-Ontario Job Fund agreement (COJF) to train employees, promote employer investment in their employees through training, development, and mentoring programs

B. Use electricity-pricing support to qualify northern industrial energy firms to facilitate trade between cities and regions for revenue growth.

For Individuals-New Jobs Strategy

A. Ontario government to dedicate \$250m over 2 years to promote youth employment.

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Q&A: How accessible are these programs? What monitoring mechanisms are in place to ensure the effectiveness of these programs to achieve the aims of the ON government?

For Skilled Tradesmen:

A. ON government to invest \$13m over 2 years for pre apprenticeship programs to benefit diploma graduates.

\$19m for in class training programs,

\$23m to be invested in the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund.

Q&A: What is the ease of accessibility, flexibility of criteria & qualifiers to the targets? How does government ensure that meaningful impact is made?

4. Innovation & Dynamic Business Environment

A. ON government's Asset optimization program, including divestment from GM Motors, to yield a gain of C\$ 1.1b.

B. A scheduled IPO for Hydro-One to reduce government holdings and accept new investors at levels up to 10% will free up additional cash for the Trillium Trust dedicated to Infrastructure development.

Q&A: How does Finance determine Asset sell down measures: what to sell, when, how, and to who to release development fund.

5. Poverty Reduction: To be implemented by July 2015. The annual ON child benefit now \$1,336 as indexed to inflation rate. Higher social assistance rates applied to categories of disabled groups & families. Very lofty plans but kindly address the following:

Q&A: Methods of public consultation and discussions, who determines what firms to invest in or divest from, basis of discussion, what profitability metrics are adopted, what assembly measures are used. Are these decisions taken solely by the Premier's Advisory council?

Q&A: Is there an Expert Panel that determines reduction in social assistance rates, minimum wage, poverty reduction strategies for Ontario. Are their metrics for impact assessment? How are these programs monitored?

Q&A: Ontario Online- (discussed on page 18 of the budget). Ontario Online could be a main source of income & opportunity provider in post-graduate (PG) courses if well structured. You might be aware of several Ontarians taking PG courses across US universities due to absence of online programs in Ontario. How do you plan to address

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these gaps to stop the bleeding in revenues lost to other countries? This might be a source of reduction in the \$10b deficit so far accumulated by the government to date.

Signed

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