Ontario Liberals

Change that’s working
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A message from Dalton McGuinty

It’s an honour to serve as Premier of Ontario. I asked for this job in 2003, so that I could turn around public health care, public education and public services that Ontario families rely on to get ahead.

We ran on an ambitious platform and four years later, our results speak for themselves. Ontario public services are turning the corner because we have been able to make progress on the vast majority of our plan. Some elements of our plan we couldn’t do right away. And some promises were regretfully broken. Let me say upfront I was raised to keep my word, and I take full responsibility for decisions that were made.

In every case, whether it was decisions to move forward with the vast majority of commitments or the cases where we have delayed or changed direction, I used my best judgment about doing the right thing for Ontario. I hope that you will agree with my judgment that they were the right decisions for the right reasons.

In the following pages, we will lay out our record as we see it, in as straightforward and forthright a manner as we can. We compared our progress to the list of promises contained in the Toronto Sun article published shortly after the last provincial election on October 12, 2003. Our opposition will be critical of various shortcomings to the point of exaggeration and that’s ok. That’s their job.

But Ontario is moving forward. Our economy is stronger, with over 340,000 more Ontarians working than just four years ago.

Our schools are better: class sizes are smaller in the crucial early grades, test scores in reading, writing and math are up, and graduation rates are improving. Gone are the cuts and chaos that hurt our kids just four years ago.

Our medicare is slowly but surely getting back on track and we’re starting to see real improvements: hiring 8,000 new nurses, half a million more Ontarians with a family doctor, 100 new or expanded hospitals, and speedier access to key procedures such as heart surgery, MRIs and cancer treatment. We’ve come a long way, together, from the days when hospitals were being closed and nurses were being fired.

We’re doing more to make our province green and clean: protection of a 1.8 million acre greenbelt, a new energy plan that’s conserving more electricity, generating more renewable energy, and steadily eliminating our reliance on coal. Five years after the report on the Walkerton drinking water tragedy, there are tougher laws and more enforcement to back them up.

But Ontario is about more than appreciating how far we’ve come. It’s about seeing how much further we can go. Our province is about realizing our true potential — as individuals, and as families and businesses. The opportunity to move forward is what brought so many of us here from all over the world; and it’s what keeps us here, year after year, generation following generation. So we have much more to do, together.

There is a lot at stake. Competition in the global economy is fierce. We have to keep moving forward, or risk falling behind. Our people can take on the world — and win. But it’s up to all of us to equip them to overcome the challenges, and seize the opportunities, of the 21st century. We are making sure Ontarians are well educated and highly skilled, that they can enjoy the best of health, supported by high quality, universal medicare, and that they can depend on both a cleaner environment and a stronger economy.

In the following pages, we mark how far we’ve come, and thank Ontarians for working with us for the past four years. We’ve come a long way. But we have much more to do. And I know we can do it the same way we’ve moved forward these past four years — by working and building and dreaming together.

Dalton McGuinty
Excellence for All

The Ontario Liberal Plan for Education
Our kids are our most precious resource. Giving our children the best education and positive opportunities is our strongest economic advantage and our best chance at building a strong, caring society.

Under the Conservatives, our school buildings were crumbling. Teachers were unhappy, and students lost 26 million learning days to teacher strikes. Class sizes were often swollen to over 30 children, and yet 503 public schools closed, while 266 private ones opened.

Students under the Conservatives remember sharing textbooks and school hallways littered with garbage. They don’t remember field trips, playing on school sports teams, or dancing at proms because there weren’t field trips, sports teams or dances.

When we were elected in 2003, we laid out a plan to turn our schools around. It focused on student success and creating a collaborative environment where all members of the education community — parents, teachers, school boards, government and students — could come together in the best interest of Ontario’s kids.

We’re working with the education community to revive Ontario’s public education system. We’ve come a long way together — but there’s still more to do.

**CHANGE THAT’S WORKING**

**High Student Achievement**

*We promised to build a strong public education system that supports student success and raises student achievement.*

We’ve strengthened the public education system with $3.7 billion in new investments, or 29 per cent per student. Test scores are higher and we are working with parents and teachers to make sure our kids do better in school. The latest results show 65 per cent of grade 3 students scored at or above the provincial standard, a gain of 11 percentage points from 2002-2003. Together, we are on track to meeting our goal of 75 per cent.

These improvements in test scores mean that since 2003:

- The number of schools meeting the provincial standards has doubled
- The number of low-performing schools has been cut in half

*We promised to promote excellence in learning for all Ontario students and cancel tax breaks for exclusive private schools.*

We believe public education should be the best education. That’s why we cancelled the tax break for private schools. Public dollars should fund public education and only public education, the system that educates 95 per cent of Ontario children.

*We promised to bring peace and stability to our schools.*

We haven’t had a single full-time teachers’ strike in the past four years. All 122 contract negotiations between school boards, classroom teachers and teachers’ federations have been settled.

We also created the Provincial Stability Commission to uphold goodwill in the education sector. It means teachers, school board officials and ministry staff are getting together to develop best practices for Ontario’s kids.

We canceled the Professional Learning Program, which was insulting to teachers and forced them to re-certify.

We are proud of Ontario’s students and teachers — together we’re making public education the best education.
We promised to give teachers the tools and the training for excellence.

We delivered, and so did our teachers. When we offered them enhanced training, on an optional basis, and on their own time, they packed the place. When we asked them to embrace change, and work with us, on behalf of our kids, they met us with open minds and tremendous professionalism. We set the bar high for student achievement, and student performance is improving, year after year.

We also:

- Lifted the limit on Professional Activity days from the Education Act and added two more per year for increased opportunity for teacher training
- Provided literacy and numeracy summer training courses for 17,000 teachers between 2004-2006 — another 7,000 are expected to participate in 2007
- Provided reading training courses for 12,000 teachers and principals in 2005-2006
- Provided Differentiated Instruction training courses for 26,000 teachers and principals in 2005-2006 to reach all students in every learning style.

And we are working to make sure every new teacher gets the career-start they need, including orientation, mentoring, professional development and training through the New Teacher Induction Program.

We promised to make high quality childcare and education available for our youngest learners … we promised to improve the quality and affordability of childcare for families.

We met our goal of creating 22,000 new childcare spaces for Ontario families, including spaces in 40 new schools. These spaces will be sustained for the next four years.

We also delivered a new childcare funding model so more low and middle-income families will qualify for childcare subsidies. We increased the deduction limit for informal childcare for social assistance recipients from $390 to $600 per month per child to provide another childcare option for working parents.

And we are supporting 54 Parent and Family Literacy Centres in the Toronto District School Board while creating 32 new centres across the province, beginning in September 2007. Almost 17,000 children and over 14,000 adults will have access to Parent and Family Literacy Centres in 2007-2008, another way to help children learn and succeed.

We promised to enhance the quality of childcare in Ontario by raising professional standards and ensuring they are met.

We passed legislation to create a new College of Early Childhood Educators. It will establish high professional standards for quality childcare and early learning programs. It means Ontario’s kids will get the strong start they need.

We promised to help the children who need the most help – those with special needs … we promised to streamline the $50 million assessment process … and invest the savings in services for kids with special needs.

We streamlined the assessment process to better support our kids who need extra help. Kids with special needs are doing better as a result.

We increased funding for special needs students. The Special Education Grant goes toward the cost of programs and services for students with special needs.

We also provided one-time funding to support students with special needs. Initiatives include:

- Enabling the Council of Ontario Directors of Education to deliver increased professional development so teachers will be better equipped to work with students with special education needs.
Enabling the Ontario Psychological Association to work with school boards to reduce waiting times for student assessments, allowing more students to have their needs properly determined.

Training through the Geneva Centre for Autism for teachers’ assistants of students with autism spectrum disorders.

We’re caring for children with special needs by supporting the teachers who work with them and we’re establishing a new mentoring program to give young adults with developmental disabilities the guidance and skills they’ll need when they leave school.

We’re helping approximately 7,000 children and youth with special needs through investments in Ontario’s children’s treatment centres.

We are making special education programs and services more accessible by reducing the paperwork and delays in the Identification, Placement and Review Committee process.

We are continuing to work with school boards to improve the Special Education Grant. We want to stress the importance of local decision-making, outcomes for students and identifying students with special needs in the first place.

We promised to create a meaningful high school diploma program that combines academic achievement and work preparation for students in danger of dropping out.

We delivered. More of our kids are graduating high school. The Student Success Strategy includes:

- 1,925 new high school teachers by September 2007 – 1,100 of these are specialized Student Success teachers
- 159 Learning to 18 lighthouse pilot projects creating new ways for students to succeed, including credit recovery and co-op education

The High Skills Major pilot program that allows students to take courses in specialized areas such as manufacturing, arts, construction and tourism

The option of counting up to two co-op courses towards students’ 18 compulsory credits. Over 90,000 students have participated in co-op courses — three times more than when we were elected.

Adding flexibility to the high school curriculum to address the needs of struggling students.

Expanding the Dual Credit Program from 65 pilot projects to 155 in 2007-2008. The program allows students to earn credits for designated courses towards both their high school diploma and postsecondary education. It keeps students at risk of dropping out in school longer, and helps them achieve education and career goals.

We’re also working to give students meaningful work experiences. The OPS Learn and Work Program engages high-risk youth between the ages of 16 and 19 by offering them meaningful work experiences in the Ontario government.

We promised to make learning mandatory to age 18 … we promised to create a stronger more integrated apprenticeship system.

We won’t give up on our youth. We passed legislation that is laying the groundwork for real improvement in graduation rates. We increased the age at which a student can legally leave school from 16 to 18. Teens must either graduate or continue learning until then.

We also expanded the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) to allow students to test-drive their careers. This program provides high school students with cooperative education and workplace-based experience in the skilled trades. Last year, more than 19,000 employers took part in the program. In the first three years of our mandate, over 69,000 Ontario high school students participated in the OYAP program.
We promised to help our schools develop good citizens through character education.

Our character education programs are in place in Ontario schools for the 2007-2008 school year. We know that public education is our best chance for building a strong and caring society. We conducted 24 community consultation sessions across the province and the input provided is at the centre of our vision for character development programs.

**Better Schools For Better Learning**

**We promised to include music, art, drama, sports and extra-curricular activities because we believe learning goes beyond the basics.**

Since 2003 we’ve delivered 1,925 new elementary specialist teachers whose focus is on key areas such as music and the arts and phys-ed.

We increased our support for programs and activities such as arts and physical and outdoor education.

And we provided funding to school boards across the province in January 2007 to buy musical instruments, art supplies and resources to support dance, drama, music and media arts in elementary and high schools. We also provided additional funding to arts education associations and community organizations to host artists, performances and workshops in schools.

**We promised to create a Lighthouse program so successful school programs can be shared.**

We want our schools to share practices that make a positive difference to student learning. That’s why we launched the School on the Move: Lighthouse Program. Over the school year, more than 60 schools reach out to other schools, sharing their best ideas and practices to help raise student achievement.

**We promised not to allow any school to fail our kids … we promised to monitor school performance to be sure schools are making the grade and to help struggling schools get back on track.**

We want to make sure all Ontario students get the opportunities they deserve and become caring, productive members of society. In 2002, The Rozanski report was released identifying $1.7 billion needed to bring public education back to health. We more than doubled this recommendation. We’re making sure every student receives the support they need to reach their full potential. We have:

- Increased funding to Ontario’s publicly funded schools by $3.7 billion since 2003
- Made investments to help ensure stability and progress
- Introduced our Literacy and Numeracy Strategy so our youngest learners are placed in smaller classes where they can get the attention they need
- Introduced our Ontario Focused Intervention Plan to provide targeted resources and programs for schools and boards that are struggling
- Created the Student Success Strategy beginning in grade 7 to help kids stay in school and graduate
- Posted online progress reports for each school board

Since we were elected, student achievement on provincial tests has gone up 10 per cent and the graduation rate has risen from 68 to 73 per cent — proof that students are succeeding under our government.
Working Together

We promised to treat our teachers with the professional respect they deserve.

We’re working with our teachers. Together we’re strengthening education for our kids. 100 per cent of our contract negotiations have been settled with schools boards and teachers’ federations.

We’ve created the Education Partnership Table so that all sides of education — teachers, principals, school boards, parents and students — can come together to help shape provincial policies and programs.

And we are working to make sure every new teacher gets the career-start they need, including orientation, mentoring, professional development and training through the New Teacher Induction Program.

We promised to offer public school choice, so parents can decide which public school is right for their child.

We were not able to offer parents their choice of public schools for their children. Instead, we focused on strengthening all public schools. We changed the funding formula to support and sustain small schools and issued guidelines on school closures that take community interest into consideration. We created the Supported Schools Allocation to ensure that remote schools remain viable.

We promised to turn the Ontario College of Teachers into a professional body that sets the highest standards for the profession and earns the respect of teachers and parents.

We revitalized and depoliticized the Ontario College of Teachers by changing the governance structure of the College to ensure there is a majority of classroom teachers on the Council. The Ontario College of Teachers has renewed strength in its duty to protect the public interest.

We promised to ensure that three-year funding could actually be achieved.

For the first time we have put in place multi-year funding so school boards can plan their spending because they know what they will receive for the next three years.

We delivered the Provincial Framework agreement that set out four years of funding increases for all contracts signed by teacher federations and school boards that conformed to the framework.

We promised to ensure school boards provide strong local accountability and decision-making.

We increased education funding by $3.7 billion, or 29 per cent per student. This funding means more resources while allowing flexibility in responding to local needs. We also increased funding for Learning Opportunities, Remote and Rural, Declining Enrolment and English as a Second Language grants.

We introduced new grants allowing school boards to respond to local needs, including:

1. Program Enhancement Grant: supports programs and activities such as arts, music, physical education and outdoor education. Each board will have the flexibility to decide how to use this funding to best suit student needs.

2. Supported Schools Allocation: expands school-based support for small Ontario communities where schools have low enrolment and are a significant distance from other schools under the same school board. This additional funding will benefit 177 schools.

3. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement: supports improving achievement for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. This grant helps boards offer and expand Native Language and Native Studies courses, and support programs to assist aboriginal students.
4. School Foundation Grant: helps put small and rural schools on an equal footing with larger schools by ensuring that every school has a principal and secretary, regardless of the number of students enrolled.

We promised to establish an independent Curriculum Council to plan and prepare for curriculum changes.

We created a Curriculum Council to give advice to the Minister of Education on issues affecting elementary and secondary curriculum. The council is chaired by Dr. Dennis Thiessen — currently Chair of the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.

We created a working Group on Environmental Education, chaired by Dr. Roberta Bondar, to review how the environment and conservation are taught in Ontario schools. The government is implementing all of the recommendations of the working group’s report Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future. Highlights include:

- Integrating environmental education into all subjects in all grades
- Developing an optional grade 11 course focussed on environmental education
- Increasing learning opportunities for students that include hands-on experience
- Creating and publishing an environmental education policy
- Establishing environmental education standards to be applied to current and future reviews of curriculum
- Working more closely with community partners and other government ministries to enhance environmental education
- Providing training and resource guides to teachers.

CHANGE IN PROGRESS

We promised a real cap of 20 students per class in the all-important early grades (JK-3).

Ontario’s youngest students are getting the attention they need in classes of 20 or fewer students. We funded over 5,100 new teachers to reduce class sizes. And parents can now track class sizes online at www.ontario.ca/classsizes.

We are on track to ensure that 90 per cent of primary classes have 20 or fewer students this fall. The number of classes with 25 or more students has virtually disappeared — dropping from 25 to three per cent over the past three years. We’re confident we can make even more progress for Ontario’s youngest learners.

We promised to make reading, writing and math mandatory in each teaching day.

We’re boosting student achievement with the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat established in November 2004 under the leadership of respected educator Dr. Avis Glaze. Over 70 highly skilled and experienced educators work directly with schools and school boards across the province to improve reading, writing and math skills. As a result of our combined efforts, the number of students reaching the provincial standard on reading, writing and math tests has risen from 54 per cent in 2002-2003 to 64 per cent in 2005-2006. While there is more work to be done to improve student achievement, the results are encouraging and show we are making great progress.

We promised not to let schools fail because of a flawed funding formula. We promised to create a fair model to reflect the local needs of diverse communities.

We’ve strengthened the public education system with $3.7 billion in new investments, or 29 per cent per student. Since coming to office we have made 10 key improvements to the funding formula:
1. More teachers — both in elementary and secondary schools

2. Peace and stability — addressing Dr. Mordechai Rozanski’s major findings by updating and increasing salary benchmarks to fund four-year agreements

3. Responding to local needs — changing the one size fits all formula to recognize the unique needs of:
   - Northern and rural boards to protect small schools from closing
   - French-language boards by providing additional support for early learning programs, more teachers and a new school construction program
   - Boards with declining enrolment with funding support to recognize costs decline slower than revenue
   - All boards by creating the Program Enhancement Grant to support programs and activities such as arts, music, physical education and outdoor education

4. Meeting student needs — increased funding for students at risk, English as a Second Language and Perfectionnement-du-français programs and creating the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement

5. Reflecting real costs — increasing benchmarks for fuel, utilities, salaries, benefits and other costs

6. Providing school-based funding — creating the School Foundation Grant so small schools and schools with declining enrolment get the stable funding they need

7. Renewing our schools — repairing, rebuilding and expanding schools, and providing funding to make schools healthier and safer for students and staff

8. Reforming special education — providing support to more special-needs students, increasing funding for special-needs students at boards with growing enrolment and providing stable funding for special-needs students at boards with decreasing enrolment

9. Improving transportation funding — encouraging boards to work together to improve service for students and to reduce costs

10. Strengthening school-community partnerships — introducing annual funding to reduce fees that community groups pay to use schools after hours and providing funding to encourage parent engagement.

We promised to make schools safe so students can concentrate on learning.

We are combining discipline with opportunities for students to continue their education. We believe that taking troubled students out of the school system only puts them at increased risk. Keeping them in a healthy social environment does more to turn kids around than suspending or expelling them. So mandatory suspensions and expulsions are no longer allowed. Principals and schools boards are instead required to find alternatives that discipline students while keeping them in school wherever possible.

However, we also realize that some behaviours cannot be tolerated, so we added bullying to the list of suspension-worthy behaviours.

We are promoting safe schools programs and providing supports for all expelled students, and students serving long-term suspensions. We are also training principals and vice-principals to apply discipline in a non-discriminatory manner.

Our investments to make schools safer include:

- A three year partnership with Kids Help Phone to provide more resources for bullying and cyber-bullying prevention support
- Model projects to promote positive behaviour
A bullying prevention program registry and funding for every school in Ontario for bullying prevention programs, training and resources

A Bullying and Violence Prevention Special Circumstances Fund through the Ontario Educational Services Corp for schools identified with additional challenges

Bullying prevention training for 7,500 principals and up to 25,000 teachers

Safety audits at Ontario schools to raise awareness of safety and security issues in and around schools

Entranceway security measures such as cameras in 844 elementary schools as part of the government’s Safe Welcome Program to help schools better monitor visitors and limit points of access into schools

We also provided software to approximately 3,100 schools for students in grade 7 and 8. The computer programs make students aware of potential dangers such as Internet luring, cyber-stalking and child pornography.

We promised that within our first mandate, 75 per cent of our students would meet or exceed the provincial standard on province-wide tests.

We’ve made great progress: now, 65 per cent of kids were meeting the provincial standards, up at least ten per cent from 2002-2003. We’re confident we can continue to move Ontario’s students forward on provincial testing and we will drive to reach our goal of 75 per cent.

We promised to ensure transparency in public education.

We are making funding and board spending more transparent. We introduced new online progress reports for each district school board, with eight indicators showing board progress on government education priorities, including improved literacy rates, smaller class sizes in the primary grades and sound financial management.

We introduced an online class size tracker that shows progress being made to reduce class sizes across Ontario on a board and school-by-school basis.

And we delivered new communication tools including a parent website portal and e-network.

OVER AND ABOVE

Helping Children with Autism

We promised to work with clinical directors, parents, teachers and school boards to devise a feasible way in which autistic children in our province can get the support and treatment they need — including children over the age of six.

We eliminated the age six cutoff the previous Conservative government introduced. Approximately 60 per cent of children now receiving service are over the age of six.

We have nearly tripled our support of children and youth with autism.

Approximately 160 per cent more children will be receiving Intensive Behavioural Intervention therapy in 2007 as compared to April 2004.

We’ve made more supports available in the school system, by working with all our partners (clinical directors, parents, teachers and school boards). The Ministry of Education has directed Applied Behaviour Analysis methods to be used with students with autism and we’re providing the training and support to make this happen.

Good Places to Learn

Under our Good Places to Learn program, 300 new schools opened or are under construction. We are investing in repair projects across the province — from new roofs, to boiler rooms to windows — so that our kids have
the proper environment for learning. Already, close to 11,000 projects are complete or underway.

**Ontario Child Benefit**

Helping children in poverty is both a social and economic imperative. That’s why we introduced the historic Ontario Child Benefit (OCB). The OCB will reach 1.3 million vulnerable kids. This will expand opportunity for 600,000 families. It will provide support for children in every low-income family, whether their parents are working or not. It means parents can move off welfare without worrying about losing support for their kids.

**Adult Education**

We are investing in three adult education pilot initiatives. The first will recognize adult newcomers’ first languages for high school credit. We are committed to reaching every student with a fair and high quality education. By respecting the valuable language skills that newcomers bring to Ontario, we will help more of them succeed in school and graduate. The other two projects are:

- Finding better ways to recognize adult learners’ skills and knowledge
- Exploring effective local partnerships between school boards and community agencies, local organizations, and colleges to provide a full range of services for adult learners

**American Sign Language Regulation**

We are improving the learning environment for students who are deaf or hard of hearing by permitting American Sign Language (ASL) and Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) to be used in Ontario schools. We are committed to ensuring that students who are deaf receive an education that helps them reach their full potential. Publicly funded school boards are encouraged to offer ASL and LSQ to students in the classroom if it will benefit their education.

**English As a Second Language**

Starting this September, school boards will have a new K-12 policy for English language learners that will ensure all English As a Second Language (ESL) students have the programs and supports they need to achieve success in school. Our policy will help every ESL learner by developing their talents, meeting their personal goals, and developing the knowledge and skills they need to contribute fully to Ontario’s future.

**Putting Environmental Education Back Into The Curriculum**

By January 2008, all Ontario students will learn more about the environment. Following receipt of the report from the Curriculum Council and the Working Group on Environmental Education, we announced immediate action on the recommendations to give students more environmental knowledge and teachers the resources to build that knowledge. To do this, we are:

- Integrating environmental education into all subjects in all grades
- Developing a new optional grade 11 course focussed on environmental education
- Increasing experiential learning opportunities for students
- Creating and publishing an environmental education policy by fall 2008 to ensure high quality and relevant learning
- Establishing environmental education standards to be applied to current and future reviews of curriculum
- Working more closely with community partners and other government ministries to enhance environmental education
Community Use of Schools

We believe Ontario’s schools should be true community hubs where people gather to learn, participate in community-based organizations and stay active. By ensuring school space is affordable and accessible to the communities schools serve, we are supporting healthy, active lifestyles and encouraging citizen engagement in community activities. The Community Use of Schools initiative provides annual funding to help school boards with the costs of operating schools after hours for community use. This allows boards to lower or eliminate the fees charged to community groups for use of school space, making programs and services more accessible and affordable.

Library Funding

Students across the province are benefiting from new textbooks, other learning resources (such as magazines, computer software and multi-media resources, including CD-ROMs and DVDs) and library resources. Since 2003, funding for library and guidance services has increased by 23 per cent. Library staffing numbers have also increased: library teachers by 3.4 per cent, and library technicians and other library staff by 23 per cent. We provided one-time funding for library books, allocated to each school.

New Funding Grants

Since coming to office we have dramatically improved the Funding Formula. Our changes reflect our commitment to restoring a strong, publicly funded education system. We continually review the funding formula ensuring it is as effective and responsive as possible.

We created the Program Enhancement Grant to fund local programs like arts, music, physical education and outdoor activities that build on our curriculum to support well-rounded students.

We created the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement to provide enhanced and ongoing support for these students.

We created the School Foundation Grant to guarantee school-based funding for principals, vice-principals and secretaries.

And we created the Supported Schools Allocation to provide support for our small schools in rural and northern areas.

Ontario Parent Involvement policy and school council grants

We recognize the vital role parents play in the education of their children. That’s why we created the first-ever Ontario Parent Involvement policy to make it easier for all parents to participate in their children’s education. This investment includes the new Parent Engagement Office in the Ministry of Education and website: www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123

Healthy Schools

We developed the Healthy Schools Recognition Program to promote and celebrate healthy behaviours and practices in Ontario’s publicly funded schools. Over 1,300 schools took up the first-ever Healthy Schools Challenge across the province. Promoting healthy eating, increased physical activity and discouraging smoking are just a few of the things schools are doing to meet the challenge.

To keep our kids healthy at school, we:

✓ Banned junk food in elementary school vending machines
✓ Worked with Anaphylaxis Canada to raise awareness of anaphylaxis and provided kits to each school so that students and teachers know what to do if someone goes into anaphylactic shock under Sabrina’s Law
✓ Gave all high school students the opportunity to learn CPR
Provided grants to 600 high schools to create grassroots anti-smoking awareness campaigns

Made 20 minutes of physical activity mandatory in the school day.

Premier’s Teaching Awards

We created the Premier’s Teachers Awards to recognize and celebrate outstanding educators. The 2006-2007 Premier’s Awards for Teaching Excellence recognize 15 educators and staff who excel at unlocking the potential of Ontario’s young people.

Swim to Survive

We are supporting the Lifesaving Society’s Swim to Survive program. This program has trained more than 45,000 Ontarians to be prepared for an unexpected fall into deep water.

Trustee and Student Trustee honorariums

Sound local decision-making by local representatives is essential to student success. We recognize and support the invaluable role school board trustees play in our publicly funded education system. Increasing the trustee honoraria recognizes and provides greater respect to the invaluable role of trustees in our public education system. We also removed punitive provisions regarding trustees (fines and banning them from running for election for five years.) We empowered student trustees by giving them an honorarium, more input at board meetings, and supports to carry out their role.

TFO To Become A Stronger, Independent Organization

We are keeping our commitment to create an independent TFO to both strengthen the network and enable it to deliver exceptional programming in support of Ontario’s francophone community. On April 1, 2007, TFO became independent from The Ontario Education Communications Authority (TVOntario) with its own board of directors. To support this change, we are making a one-time investment for transition, relocation and start-up costs, and for digital conversion. We will continue to provide annual funding to ensure that TFO meets the specific educational and cultural needs of the francophone community and fulfills its broadcasting and communications mandate.
Growing Strong Communities

The Ontario Liberal Plan for Clean, Safe Communities that Work
The strength of our province depends on the strength of our communities. That’s why our communities are so important.

When we were elected in 2003, we laid out a plan to strengthen our communities by protecting our shared environment, keeping our streets safe, embracing our diversity and planning for the future.

We want all Ontarians to enjoy the high quality of life that comes with living in a rich and diverse province.

We’ve come a long way together, but there’s still more to do.

**CHANGE THAT’S WORKING**

**Clean Communities**

*We promised to clean up our air, protect our water and crack down on polluters.*

We remain committed to phasing out all of Ontario’s dirty coal plants but we weren’t able to do it by 2007 without jeopardizing the power supply to Ontarians. We closed the Lakeview Coal plant, the largest single source of air pollution in the Greater Toronto Area. We reduced coal-fired generation by 32 per cent. By the end of 2014 we will eliminate coal completely.

Meanwhile, emissions from coal fired power plants have been reduced: carbon dioxide is down 29 per cent, nitrogen oxide is down 46 per cent, sulphur dioxide is down 44 per cent, mercury is down 46 per cent and particulate emissions are down 31 per cent.

We capped the emissions of large polluters, while updating the air standard for over 40 pollutants — the largest change in over 25 years.

We required communities to protect their municipal drinking water supplies with locally driven, science-based protection plans, thanks to our Clean Water Act.

We are also protecting our rivers and lakes from massive diversions of water, and imposing a charge, for the first time, on commercial and industrial users.

We implemented all of the recommendations from the Walkerton Inquiry.

To crack down on polluters, we passed the You Spill, You Pay bill that imposes financial penalties on industrial polluters of up to $100,000 per day.

Ontario was one of the last places in North America where companies could put untreated toxic waste into our soil. We banned that practice.

Our gasoline is cleaner: We mandated that gasoline sold in Ontario must contain five per cent cleaner burning ethanol — the equivalent to taking 800,000 cars off the road — while creating jobs in Ontario’s new renewable fuels industry. We plan to bring ethanol content up to 10 per cent.

We set aggressive yet realistic targets to reduce emissions that cause climate change. We will reach Kyoto targets by 2014, achieve 15 per cent reduction below 1990 levels by 2020 and an 80 per cent reduction by 2050.

We promised to put quality of life first by tackling gridlock, containing sprawl and preserving greenspace.

We’ve made record investments to improve public transit systems.

Ontarians need to get to where they’re going and goods need to make it to market. That’s why we’ve also invested in improvements to our municipal roads and bridges.

We announced the Move Ontario 2020 plan to invest more than $17.5 billion in public transit capital projects. With 902 kilometres of new or improved rapid transit, it is the largest transit build in Canadian history.

We’re protecting natural systems and agricultural areas by directing growth to urban centres. We’re also working to curb sprawl and create more livable, complete communities with a greater mix of businesses, housing,
parks and transportation with the first ever Growth Plan for the Golden Horseshoe.

Our plan for growth includes greenspace. That’s why we delivered the Greenbelt: 1.8 million acres of greenspace permanently protected for Ontarians to enjoy for years to come.

On top of that, we created 200,000 acres of greenspace across the province. This includes adding 5,500 acres to the GTA’s Rouge Park bringing it to 11,500 acres. We created the 180-acre Eramosa Karst Conservation Area in Hamilton and we delivered more than 650 acres of ecologically significant lands in the Town of Oakville into the care of Conservation Halton.

**We promised to provide real protection for tenants and invest in affordable housing.**

We’re providing better protection for tenants and landlords by ensuring fair rent increases and promoting investment in rental housing.

The new Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program has brought us close to our goal of 20,000 new housing units, a target we will soon reach. We also increased the number of new housing allowances to 35,000.

We have prevented more than 9,600 low-income households from being evicted because of a missed rent payment through investments in the Rent Bank Program.

Finally, we established the Ontario Mortgage and Housing Initiative to provide low-cost, long-term financing for Affordable Housing Projects.

**We promised to do more than talk. We will build safe communities, with more police and more prosecutors.**

There are 1,000 new police officers in Ontario communities, thanks to the Safer Communities-1,000 Officers Partnership Program.

There are an additional 60 officers fighting guns and gangs outside of Toronto and 200 new officers will be added to OPP ranks.

We expanded the Guns and Gangs Task Force twice since October 2005, leading to a total of 100 new Crown prosecutors in Ontario.

**We promised to bring clean, renewable energy to Ontario.**

By 2025 we expect energy from renewables to amount to 15,700 megawatts. In 2003 there were only 10 windmills in the province; today we have 700 planned or in place. We brought 395 megawatts of wind power online, for a total of 415 megawatts of installed wind power making us a national leader. By 2025 we expect energy from renewables to amount to 15,700 megawatts.

Contracts awarded will potentially lead to over $4.5 billion in renewable energy investment in Ontario.

We have contracted for five per cent of new generating capacity to come from renewable sources by the end of 2007, and 10 per cent by 2010.

We delivered a standard offer for renewables. It will allow small local renewable energy producers to get into the energy market. So far, 98 contracts have been awarded with the potential to generate over 500 megawatts of renewable energy (enough to power more than 130,000 homes), including the world’s largest solar farm in Sarnia.

We’re harnessing renewable energy from farm, small businesses, and consumers that can now receive credit for the excess power they produce with the net metering program we created.

And we are increasing output at the Niagara tunnel to supply enough power for 160,000 homes.
Growing Strong Communities

We promised to protect our water from stream to tap by preventing it from getting polluted in the first place.

We implemented every recommendation of the Walkerton Inquiry.

We now require communities to protect their municipal drinking water supplies with locally driven, science-based protection plans. We passed what the Sierra Legal Defence Fund called the toughest Clean Water Act in Canada.

We hired 33 drinking water inspectors to enforce new clean drinking water rules.

We expanded the water-monitoring network. There are now 462 monitoring locations — 100 more since 2003.

We promised to stop allowing companies to raid our precious water supplies for free.

We are protecting our rivers and lakes from massive diversions of water, and imposing a charge, for the first time, on commercial and industrial users.

A Cleaner Ontario

We promised to protect Ontario from pollution and hazardous waste.

Land disposal of untreated hazardous wastes is now illegal in Ontario.

We passed the You Spill, You Pay legislation that fines industrial polluters up to $100,000 per day.

And we’re working with Waste Diversion Ontario to create incentives to reuse and recycle hazardous household materials and special waste, and to increase the number of collection sites.

Communities That work

We promised to help new Canadians settle more quickly in Ontario.

We’re helping to strengthen the economic advantage provided by our diversity. We negotiated the first-ever Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement, which quadruples federal spending on language training and settlement services over five years. Average annual spending for settlement services in Ontario quadrupled to approximately $3,400 per new Canadian.

Ontario invests more than any other province in newcomers. We expanded the Newcomer Settlement Program by 29 per cent to support 81 community agencies providing settlement services. We to make it easier and quicker for newcomers to start their lives here.

We’re proud of the diversity we have in Ontario. It’s in our best interest to take advantage of the skills and knowledge that arrive every day. That’s why we’re delivering more than 90 Bridge Training projects to help thousands of newcomers work in over 100 trades and professions.

We’re providing Occupation-Specific Language Training, English-as-a-Second Language (ESL), French-as-a-Second Language (FSL), and Citizenship and Language Training.

We’ve placed 72 newcomers in 15 Ministries in fields such as chemistry, environment, health and business administration. Many newcomers face the same frustrating roadblock — they can’t get a job without Canadian work experience and they can’t get Canadian work experience if they don’t get a job. We’re helping to clear a path with the first-ever Internship Program for Internationally Trained Individuals.

We created a Foreign Trained Professionals Loans Program to help cover assessment, training and exam costs, in partnership with the Maytree Foundation.

We launched www.OntarioImmigration.ca to support newcomers both in Ontario and abroad, prior to arrival.
We promised to ensure timely access to trades and professions for qualified professionals trained outside Canada.

In Ontario, our 34 regulated professions must have a fair, open and timely licensing process to assess the credentials of foreign trained professionals.

We established the Office of the Fairness Commissioner, to evaluate registration and licensing practices.

We created Global Experience Ontario, an Access Centre for Internationally Trained Individuals, which is a one-stop resource centre to help newcomers enter regulated professions. It also promotes internships and mentoring programs.

We’re working to get more International Medical Graduates practicing in Ontario.

We’re delivering more than 90 Bridge Training projects to help thousands of newcomers work in over 100 trades and professions.

And we have created three new Job Connect centres in Brampton, Markham and Toronto — Ontario’s high-growth areas.

Thriving Urban Communities

We promised to invest in our cities and towns.

We know Ontario’s strength is in our communities. We increased support to municipalities and took important steps for our cities and towns including:

- Investing in public infrastructure such as schools and hospitals
- Investing in our roads and bridges
- Funding for housing allowances and new affordable housing units
- Move Ontario2020, our historic transit plan for the GTA and Hamilton

We promised to invest in public transit across the province by allocating two cents of the existing provincial gas tax to municipalities.

Good public transit allows Ontarians to get where they’re going. By investing in our public transit we can encourage motorists to leave their cars at home, protecting the air we breathe and easing gridlock.

That’s why two cents of every litre of the gas tax goes to municipalities for public transit.

We announced Move Ontario 2020, a landmark plan to invest $17.5 billion over 12 years toward 52 public transit projects in the GTA and Hamilton — this is the largest public transit investment in Canadian history. It will mean 902 kilometres of new or improved public transit. It will strengthen our economy and protect our shared environment.

We promised to ensure that all developers play by the rules.

We passed two bills making sweeping reforms to the Planning Act and the Ontario Municipal Board. Developers must now conform to strict planning rules.

We passed the Greenbelt Act, which outlines where developers cannot develop; and we passed the Growth Plan, which clearly outlines where they can.
Growing Strong Communities

We promised to protect one million new acres of greenspace on the outskirts of our cities.

We doubled our commitment.

We delivered the Greenbelt protecting 1.8 million acres of greenspace for Ontario families and children permanently.

On top of that, we created 200,000 acres of greenspace across the province. This includes 5,500 acres to the GTA’s Rouge Park bringing it to 11,500 acres. We created the 180-acre Eramosa Karst Conservation Area in Hamilton and we delivered more than 650 acres of ecologically significant lands in the Town of Oakville into the care of Conservation Halton.

On the Oak Ridges Moraine, construction was well under way by the time that we had formed the government. We did halt the construction of over 1,000 new homes on the Oakridges Moraine, and because of our new greenbelt law, we’ve ensured that no more homes can be built on the Oakridges Moraine.

Long-Term Growth for the Golden Horseshoe

We promised to manage long-term growth in the Golden Horseshoe.

We’re protecting natural systems and agricultural areas by directing growth to urban centres. We’re working to curb sprawl and create more livable, complete communities with a greater mix of businesses, housing, parks and transportation with the first ever Growth Plan for the Golden Horseshoe.

We promised to protect the greenspace that surrounds our cities, forever.

We are permanently protecting 1.8 million acres of greenspace around the Greater Golden Horseshoe with the Greenbelt initiative. It is:

- Adding one million acres of newly protected land to the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment

- Permanently protecting approximately 100,000 acres of Niagara Peninsula Tender-fruit and Grape Specialty Crop area

- Protecting the entire Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area of over 15,000 acres, located in York Region and Simcoe County

- Provided full protection through the Greenbelt’s Natural Heritage System for about three quarters of the lakes, wetlands and forests within the Greenbelt

- Providing a safe habitat for 66 species at risk, including the Cucumber Tree and the Red Mulberry

- Protecting sensitive parts of the Rouge River Watershed in Richmond Hill.

We appointed the Greenbelt Council, to provide advice to the Government on the Greenbelt.

We established the Greenbelt Foundation, a non-profit independent body responsible for funding greenbelt supportive activities such as land stewardship and public education about the Greenbelt.

We promised to manage growth by encouraging good development and discouraging sprawl.

Ontario’s municipalities have more tools and clearer rules to help them develop the communities they want. Our reforms to the planning system, including the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Greenbelt, allow Ontarians at the local level to create and build on their visions of how their communities should look, feel and function.

We promised to ease gridlock with a seamless transportation network across the Greater Toronto Area.

To create seamless and integrated transit in the GTA and Hamilton, we created the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority.
We’re building and repairing over 1,700 kilometres of highways and 250 bridges.

To help Ontarians who car-pool, we opened the first provincial High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on Highways 403 and 404 in December 2005. In July 2007, we added the northbound lane on Highway 404.

We are working to improve public transit, municipal roads and bridges across the province.

We announced our Move Ontario 2020 plan for public transit capital projects in the GTA. With 902 kilometres of rapid transit, it is the largest build in Canadian history. Once complete, this project could save 300 million car trips per year. The 52 projects include two new rapid transit lines to be built in Hamilton, the electrification of the Lakeshore GO line, a new subway on Yonge Street and many others.

And we delivered the first regional fare card for public transit in Canada: the Greater Toronto Transit Authority’s Presto card. Soon, commuters will be able to replace tickets, transfers and passes with the Presto card on nine transit systems across the GTA, from Hamilton to Oshawa.

Safe Communities

Getting tough on crime

We promised to put 1,000 more cops on the street.

There are 1,000 new police officers in Ontario communities, thanks to the Safer Communities-1,000 Officers Partnership Program.

There are an additional 60 officers fighting guns and gangs outside of Toronto and 200 new officers will be added to OPP ranks.

We promised to give additional resources to Ontario’s police intelligence services.

We are working to help police and prosecutors get criminals with guns off the streets.

To better allow for coordinated investigations and prosecutions of guns and gang-related offences, we established a state-of-the-art operations centre.

We have expanded the OPP’s Provincial Weapons Enforcement Unit by 15 officers, for a total of 58.

We’re bringing together two essential forensic investigation agencies in one site: the Office of the Chief Coroner and the Centre of Forensic Sciences.

We promised to expand the number of hate crime units in the province.

We supported investigative and intelligence services and expanded the Joint Forces hate Crimes/Extremism Investigative Team.

We developed a training and education package for police officers; provided grants to various community organizations to support victims of hate crimes; and established a team of Crown attorneys specially trained in hate crime legislation.

We want to improve services for victims of hate crimes and prevent further victimization. So we also formed the Hate Crimes Working Group to make recommendations to the government on how to better address hate crimes.

We promised to put 50 more prosecutors in our courts.

We doubled our commitment. We expanded the Guns and Gangs Task Force and hired 100 new Crown Attorneys, 72 of whom are dedicated to fighting Guns and Gangs.
Growing Strong Communities

We promised to take a firm but fair approach with young offenders.

We believe in our youth, and that given the right opportunities, they will make healthy choices. That’s why we funded the Youth Opportunity Strategy for youth in under-serviced communities, like Toronto, Ottawa, London, Thunder Bay, Windsor and Hamilton.

We also delivered $15 million and challenged the private sector to match our investment to support the Youth Challenge Fund, a community-driven initiative that sponsors local programs, training and jobs for youth faced with significant challenges. We will match every additional dollar over $15 million raised by the private sector for a total potential investment of $45 million.

We’re adding more youth intervention centres. Since April 2006, we added 14 more youth intervention centres, bringing the total to 29 across the province.

And we dedicated 100 officers to fighting youth crime.

We promised to hire 100 new parole and probation officers to help protect the public.

We hired a total of 112 new parole and probation officers.

We promised to protect our kids against the dangers of Internet stalkers.

We’re implementing a multi-year strategy to combat Internet child-pornography and luring.

We enhanced the OPP’s capacity to fight Internet crimes against children. That means more detectives in the Child Pornography section, as well as technology and specialized training.

We are teaching students about the dangers of the Internet, including Internet luring, cyber-stalking and child pornography. We provided training software to approximately 3,100 schools to help kids use the Internet safely.

We delivered 46 new police officers dedicated to fighting child pornography under the 1,000 officers program.

And we’re assisting the Toronto Police Service to help effectively manage sex offenders under its own Sex Offender Registry.

Giving victims real rights

We promised to protect victims of domestic violence.

We put in place the Domestic Violence Action Plan.

We’re developing protocols to improve communication between family courts and criminal courts.

We want to stop the cycle of violence. We’re helping to identify high-risk situations for victims of domestic violence at the bail stage. This allows Crown attorneys to make better recommendations at bail hearings. We evaluated Bail Safety Pilot programs underway in Perth, Hamilton and Sudbury and added seven new sites.

We’re making it possible to block telephone calls made by inmates to help prevent offenders from harassing or threatening their victims by telephone from jail.

To assist police in identifying the dominant aggressor in domestic violence situations, we developed the Dual Charge Investigative Aid.

We updated the Violence Awareness Program for incarcerated women who have been abused or are at risk of domestic violence, and will implement it in 2007.
We promised to crack down on deadbeat parents and make them pay up.

We're helping the Family Responsibility Office crack down on deadbeat parents to improve service, stabilize operations and build an infrastructure to provide better customer service.

We made improvements to help the FRO track down those who default on child support:

- We gave FRO the power to post pictures and information about defaulting deadbeats on the FRO website, www.goodparents pay.com
- We made changes to allow the reporting of deadbeat parents to professional and occupational organizations starting with the Law Society of Upper Canada and the Ontario Motor Vehicle Industry Council
- We extended the maximum jail times from 90 to 180 days for failure to comply with support orders
- We made it easier for the FRO to obtain financial statements from a third party linked to a deadbeat

We promised to help protect women from sexual assault.

We provided one-time funding for public education, training and capital improvements in sexual assault services.

We provided funding to community-based agencies for resources and services for victims of sexual assault, hate crimes, and domestic violence.

We increased annual funding to sexual assault centres by eight per cent since coming to office.

We supported regional conferences to address sexual assault issues.

We are helping physicians and researchers better understand how to test for and detect date-rape drugs so that we can better support victims.

We’re helping community agencies change attitudes that perpetuate violence and providing information on where to go for help — especially for children and youth.

We implemented a new website, www.Equalityrules.ca, and a TV/cinema ad to promote healthy equal relationships and changes in attitudes towards violence against women.

We made changes to the Liquor Licence Act to allow women to keep their drinks with them in bars and restaurants, including the restroom, so they can avoid dangers such as date rape drugs.

Supporting our firefighters

We promised to equip our firefighters with new safety technology.

The Ontario fire service is providing improved fire protection. Using new infrared cameras, firefighters can better locate victims in smoke and darkness.

Police officers, firefighters, other community safety workers and victims of crime can find out more quickly whether they have been exposed to infectious diseases after contact with bodily fluids thanks to the Mandatory Blood Testing Act.

Ontario’s fire fighters have also benefited the Ontario Fire Service Grant to municipal fire departments to support training and to purchase new equipment. Fire Chiefs across Ontario applauded this investment. Today Ontarians benefit from improvements to what was already one of the world’s leading fire services.
**CHANGE IN PROGRESS**

We promised to get more Ontarians into affordable housing … we promised to match federal support to create almost 20,000 new housing units for needy Ontario families.

We’re providing better protection for tenants and landlords, ensuring fair rent increases, and promoting investment in rental housing.

The new Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program has brought us to 18,000 new housing units, close to our goal of 20,000, a target we will reach in the near future. We also increased the number of new housing allowances to 35,000.

We have prevented more than 9,600 low-income households from being evicted because of a missed rent payment through our investments in the Rent Bank Program.

And we established the Ontario Mortgage and Housing Initiative to provide low-cost, long-term financing for Affordable Housing Projects.

We promised to provide direct assistance to the families in greatest need of housing help through a housing allowance program. It will provide direct, immediate housing relief for 35,000 families.

We are providing housing relief for 35,000 low-income Ontario families.

We allocated 5,000 housing allowances to municipalities under the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program, and an additional 400 housing allowances to the City of Toronto under the Strong Communities Housing Allowance pilot program.

We revamped the Rent Supplement Program to double the take-up — meaning over 3,000 new rent supplements.

And in our 2007 budget, we created a five-year program to add more than 27,000 new housing allowances to help low-income households secure affordable housing.

**We promised to provide real protection for tenants.**

To provide better protection for tenants and landlords, ensure fairer rent increases and promote investment in rental housing, we scrapped the unfair Conservative law and replaced it with the new Residential Tenancies Act.

**We promised to help Ontario households and businesses reduce costs and cut their electricity consumption by at least five per cent by 2007 … we promised to lead by example, reducing the Ontario government’s own electricity use by at least 10 per cent by 2007.**

Ontario’s electricity consumers reduced peak demand by approximately 1,080 megawatts at the end of 2006 — 80 per cent of our target.

We are on target for government electricity reduction of 10 per cent by the end of 2007.

Smart Meters save money for Ontarians who choose to consume electricity during off-peak hours, reducing strain on Ontario’s electricity supply. We installed 680,000 Smart Meters as of July 31, 2007 and are well on our way to reaching our goal of 800,000 by the end of 2007. We will deliver them across the entire province by 2010.

We created the Conservation Bureau to launch programs that will result in up to 1,350 megawatts of energy savings by 2010 and up to $2 billion in new program investments across Ontario.

We have provided funding support for a wide range of residential, commercial and industrial programs that include, among others:

- Replacement of incandescent lights with compact fluorescent lights
- Promoting Energy Star compliant appliances
- Energy audits
- Load shifting to reduce peak demand
Growing Strong Communities

- Farm energy efficiency initiatives
- Energy-efficient LED traffic lighting for municipalities

Local Distribution Companies are delivering over 500 conservation initiatives, including the Great Refrigerator Round up, Peak Saver and Summer Savings.

We introduced savings for consumers with our point of sale PST rebate on Energy Star products and our rebate for home energy audits and retrofits.

We promised to shut down Ontario’s coal-burning power plants by 2007 and replace them with cleaner sources of energy.

We remain committed to phasing out all of Ontario’s dirty coal plants but we weren’t able to do it by 2007 without jeopardizing the power supply to Ontarians. We’re stopping all energy production from coal by the end of 2014. We directed the Ontario Power Authority to bring forward an Integrated Power Supply Plan to take Ontario off coal in the quickest possible time frame while ensuring that the lights stay on.

We have a 20-year electricity plan in place that’s delivering cheaper, cleaner energy.

Under our plan, we’ve gone from a standstill to being a North American leader in energy conservation and energy from renewable sources like wind and solar.

Already, we have brought 3,000 megawatts of clean, reliable and affordable power on line and have set the wheels in motion to bring in an additional 10,000 megawatts. We have reduced electricity generation from coal by 32 per cent since 2003.

And we reduced emissions from coal fired power plants: carbon dioxide is down 29 per cent, nitrogen oxide is down 46 per cent, sulphur dioxide is down 44 per cent, mercury is down 46 per cent and particulate emissions are down 31 per cent.

We promised to clean up gasoline and diesel fuel.

We’re cleaning up gasoline by delivering five per cent ethanol blend in all Ontario gasoline — equivalent to taking 800,000 cars off the road — while creating jobs in Ontario’s new renewable fuels industry. We’re going further with our plans to reduce carbon content of fuels by 10 per cent by 2020. We are investing in a project to clean up our school buses.

We promised to implement all Walkerton recommendations to prevent future tainted water tragedies.

One of the first things we did when we took office was to re-hire 33 of the environmental inspectors the Conservatives fired.

We implemented all of the Walkerton Inquiry recommendations.

We increased drinking water inspections staff by 25 per cent, appointed an Advisory Council on Drinking Water Quality Standards, implemented mandatory training and certification of drinking water systems operators, implemented annual inspections of municipal residential drinking water treatment plants and now require drinking water labs to be certified and licensed.

We created what the Sierra Legal Defence Fund called the toughest Clean Water Act in Canada.

We promised to divert 60 per cent of waste from landfills within five years.

We have not yet achieved our goal or 60 per cent diversion, but have given municipalities the tools to help them divert waste from landfills:

- We brought in the Blue Box funding formula, the first government to require industry to pay for 50 per cent of the cost of municipalities’ recycling programs
- We created a waste diversion program for all wine and spirit containers purchased in Ontario at the LCBO, agency stores and retail
distillery stores. This program will divert about 80 million bottles, or 25,000 to 30,000 tonnes of glass, from landfills annually.

- We are the first and only provincial government to take action on plastic bags by brokering a deal to reduce the usage of plastic bags by 50 per cent in five years.

- We directed Waste Diversion Ontario to develop a waste diversion program for producers of municipal hazardous or special wastes (such as paints and solvents) and electronic waste (computers, cell phones, etc.) to pay for the proper management of these materials.

- We supported partnerships including apartment recycling and zero waste events to increase the tools available to Ontario’s waste managers and improve diversion.

**We promised to involve young people in preserving our environment.**

To review how the environment and conservation are taught in Ontario schools, we created a working Group on Environmental Education, chaired by Dr. Roberta Bondar. The government is implementing all of the recommendations of the working group’s report, *Shaping Our Schools, Shaping Our Future*. Highlights include:

- Integrating environmental education into all subjects in all grades

- Developing a new optional Grade 11 course focussed on environmental education

- Increasing learning opportunities for students that include hands-on experience

- Creating and publishing an environmental education policy by fall 2007 to ensure high quality and relevant learning

- Establishing environmental education standards for application to current and future reviews of curriculum

- Working more closely with community partners and other government ministries to enhance environmental education

- Providing training and resource guides to teachers

**We promised to give real legal rights to victims of crime.**

We appointed former Chief Justice of Ontario Roy McMurtry to create a new framework for victims’ support and compensation. Meaningful and broad-based consultations on a proposed new framework will be held with victims’ organizations and communities.

**OVER AND ABOVE**

**Affordable Housing**

**More Fairness: Default Evictions**

We restructured the regulations guiding the Ontario Renal Housing Tribunal to make it fairer for tenants to file grievances and respond to eviction notices. With our new Residential Tenancies Act, the default eviction process was eliminated and replaced with a system in which tenants are guaranteed the opportunity of a hearing.

**Protecting Rental Housing**

We’re ensuring municipalities with low vacancy rates have the right to protect existing rental housing from unreasonable demolition or conversion to condos. We empowered municipalities to prohibit and regulate the demolition or conversion of residential rental properties.
Municipal Affairs

OMERS

The 2006 OMERS Act is our commitment to devolve the province’s role in OMERS governance and gives control for the plan with those who pay into it and benefit from it.

Stronger City of Toronto for a Stronger Ontario Act

Recognizing the unique needs of Ontario’s largest city, we passed the City of Toronto Act giving Toronto’s government the autonomy to make its own decisions so it can better represent the people of Toronto. The legislation allows the City to pass bylaws covering its services, public assets and programs.

Energy

Conservation and Energy Efficiency

We took the final step to completely eliminate chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in Ontario. We are eliminating CFCs in large chillers by 2012. This will accelerate the change over to new modern equipment. Because new equipment must comply with Energy Efficiency Act requirements, it will be more efficient, resulting in a summer peak load reduction of about 50 megawatts across the province.

We introduced the Energy Conservation Responsibility Act — the first of its kind in Canada — to address barriers to conservation implemented through regulations.

Ontario is the first province in Canada to be banning inefficient light bulbs and we introduced the toughest building code in the country.

Cogeneration

Seven Combined Heat and Power contracts, totaling 414 megawatts of cogeneration projects, are a significant addition to Ontario’s generating capacity — enough to provide power for 290,000 Ontario homes. Much of this new capacity will come from industrial projects. A second phase is now under development.

We also introduced the Clean Energy Standard Offer Program that encourages the development of community-based renewable energy projects.

Regulated Price Plan

The Regulated Price Plan is Ontario’s responsible plan for energy pricing. It reflects the true cost of generating electricity.

Transmission

We’re moving forward with two important transmission projects: the Quebec-Ontario Inter Tie and Bruce Transmission Project.

Transparency and Accountability for Ontario’s Energy Agencies

We have made Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One, the Ontario Energy Board, the Ontario Power Authority and the Independent Electricity System Operator subject to Public Sector Salary Disclosure, Freedom of Information query and the Auditor General.

Energy Conservation in Low-Income Housing

We’re upgrading lighting and appliances in social housing, and running energy audits and education programs. We’re also upgrading or replacing inefficient appliances and equipment, free of cost in private, low-income housing.
ENVIRONMENT

Cleaner Air

Vehicle Emissions
To promote the use of fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles in Ontario and support the auto industry’s efforts to develop improved vehicle technology, we are providing a retail sales tax (RST) rebate for qualifying vehicles, to a maximum of $2,000.

We’re tightening emissions standards and refocusing the program on the vehicles most likely to pollute through improvements to Drive Clean.

We introduced the toughest emissions testing standards for heavy-duty diesel vehicles and buses in North America.

And we’re refocusing Smog Patrol inspections on grossly polluting vehicles such as dump trucks, buses and fleet vehicles.

Fighting Climate Change

Building Code
Our new Building Code has the toughest energy-efficiency standards of any building code in the country. Over the next eight years alone, the Building Code’s increased energy-efficiency requirements will save enough energy to power 380,000 homes and will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about one mega-tonne.

Inefficient Light Bulbs Banned
We will stop the sale of inefficient light bulbs by 2012. The ban will lead to cleaner air in Ontario and help reduce greenhouse gases by as much as one million tonnes per year — the same as taking 250,000 cars off the road.

Home Energy Audits
An energy efficient home is good for the environment and also a sound investment. That’s why we’re providing rebates of up to $150 for home energy audits. We aim to conduct 130,000 audits over the next four years. We will also provide grants up to $5,000 to Ontarians making energy savings investments in their homes.

Low Carbon Fuel Standard
We signed a Memorandum of Understanding with California to coordinate policies on fuel standards. We are committed to developing a low carbon fuel standard that will require carbon emissions from transportation fuels to decrease 10 per cent by 2020 — the equivalent of removing 700,000 cars from the roads.

Other highlights of the cross-border accord include:

- Collaborating on energy efficiency programs
- Coordinating efforts to switch to clean energy technologies, promote green buildings and increase efficiency
- Working together on national, North American and international emissions trading
- Exploring market-based mechanisms such as expanding the Western Regional Climate Action Initiative to encourage an effective carbon market

Green Design Standard
We are adopting an internationally recognized green design standard for new government-owned office building construction and major renovation projects. We will also pilot a green roof project to cut costs for heating and cooling, reduce the heat island effect of cities in summer, help clean the air and prevent rain water runoff.
Municipal Eco Challenge Fund

We are working with municipalities to reduce green house gas emissions through a $220 million grants and loans program over the next three years.

MoveOntario 2020

We will build 902 kilometres of new or improved rapid transit, starting in 2008, and deliver 52 rapid transit projects. This will result in 800 million new transit trips per year, reducing the number of car trips on GTA roads by 300 million. By 2020, this $17.5 billion investment will reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the region by 10 megatonnes while also helping to ease gridlock.

Next Generation Jobs Fund

By investing $650 million through the Next Generation Jobs Fund, we’re assisting companies invest in the development of green technologies, such as the manufacturing of green cars and auto parts; the development of clean fuels; and the creation of clean technologies and products.

Energy Retrofits

We’re helping homes and businesses become more energy efficient. We launched a suite of programs including:

- Homeowner energy retrofit rebates up to $5,000
- Support for industrial/commercial/institutional sector to convert to solar thermal heating
- A point-of-sale retail sales tax exemption on the purchase of qualified ENERGY STAR light bulbs, decorative light strings, refrigerators, dishwashers, clothes washers, freezers, dehumidifiers and room air conditioners purchased, rented or leased after July 19, 2007 and before July 20, 2008
- Setting a target of 100,000 installed solar systems across Ontario
- Developing a program with Ontario’s green energy retailers to help Ontarians purchase 100 per cent green power

Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation

We are working to track climate change and its effect in Ontario. That’s why we have:

- Launched a website showing projected changes in Ontario’s climate
- Provided funding for the first year of a three-year research project into the effects of climate change on polar bears
- Appointed two co-chairs, Dr. David Pearson and Dr. Ian Burton, to a provincial panel on climate change adaptation.

Biogas Systems Financial Assistance

We are working to turn green house gases from farms into clean energy. We are helping farmers and rural businesses carry out feasibility studies for biogas systems installation, and we’re covering a portion of construction costs. The province is also streamlining the process farmers follow to build bio-digesters, and is providing clear standards and guidance on designing and operating these facilities.

Eco-License Plate

We will recognize energy efficient vehicles with a green Eco-Licence Plate, beginning in summer 2008. These plates will have a number of incentives attached to them to try and promote the purchase of cleaner vehicles.
Harness Methane Gas in Landfills

We’re working to introduce new rules so that new, expanding and existing operating landfills larger than 1.5 million cubic metres must install systems to capture methane for use as a renewable energy. Methane from Ontario landfills accounts for about four per cent of total man-made greenhouse gas emissions in the province.

Community Go Green Fund

We are introducing funding for community greenhouse gas reduction projects and public education as part of Ontario’s overall climate change strategy. The Community Go Green Fund will begin accepting applications in the fall on www.gogreenontario.ca/cggf.

More Trees

In the 2007 Budget, we included $2 million in funding to the Trees Ontario Foundation to plant more trees to improve our air quality and increase greenspace.

We are also working with partners to plant as many as five million trees per year to reach 50 million trees by 2020. This will remove 3.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide from our atmosphere by 2054, equal to 172 million car trips from Toronto to Barrie. The United Nations recognizes our plan as the most ambitious project of its kind in North America.

Cleaner Water

Ontario’s Lakes and Rivers

In December 2005, the Premier signed the Great Lakes Charter to enhance protection of Great Lakes waters.

In April 2007, partner ministries and the Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority signed The Lake Simcoe Environmental Management Strategy Memorandum of Understanding to continue improving the quality of the Lake Simcoe environment.

And following a series of industrial spills into the St. Clair River, we created the Industrial Pollution Action Team to study and recommend ways to prevent industrial spills.

Waste Disposal

Adams Mine

We put an end to the Conservative idea of dumping Toronto’s garbage into the open pit mine in Temiskaming. Our Adams Mine Lake Act ended a decade and a half of citizens’ concerns about the unfair and polluting scheme.

Better Agreements with 407 Consortium

We took the 407 to court and we lost. But in March 2006, we renegotiated the agreements with the 407 consortium to better protect the taxpayers in Ontario. It required 407 ETR to design a benefits program for frequent users. On August 1, 2007, 407 ETR launched the second phase of its Benefits/Rewards program, benefiting 100,000 407 ETR users and saving customers $40 million over almost four years as a result of our agreement.
Growing Strong Rural Communities

The Ontario Liberal Plan
for Prosperous Rural Communities that Work
Our rural communities are at the heart of Ontario’s history, and we must make sure they’re at the heart of our future. We cannot be a great province without our farmers.

When we meet the basic needs of our rural communities, they will thrive. That’s why when we took office in 2003 we laid out our plan for a healthy agricultural economy, better health care and improved public education.

We focused on new agreements with the federal government for better protection for our farmers. We aimed to be on the cutting edge of new research and innovation in agriculture and bio-technologies.

We’re making our rural communities attractive places to live and work. They are vital to our economic and social well-being. That’s why we’re improving health care and education for rural Ontarians — we’re adding more doctors, nurses and teachers. We’re also making sure our roads and bridges are fit to carry Ontario’s goods to market.

We’ve come a long way together, but there’s still more to do.

CHANGE THAT’S WORKING

We promised to implement a new generation of safety nets and companion programs, work with farmers to get nutrient management rules right, create new markets for Ontario agriculture and help promote our province’s food products to the world.

Since 2003, we’ve provided over $1 billion in direct financial support payments to farmers, providing assistance to grains and oilseeds farmers affected by low commodity prices and cattle farmers affected by BSE export bans.

We are providing our 40 per cent share of a three year Risk Management Program to support the grain and oilseed sector, starting with the 2007 crop year. We developed this program through discussions with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and representatives of the grain and oilseed sector.

We have pressed the federal government to support consultations on the future of business risk management programs as part of the development of the Next Generation of Agricultural Policy Framework.

And we’re helping livestock farmers cover the costs associated with following new nutrient management rules and protecting provincial water supplies.

We promised to give rural communities a voice and provide them with stable funding so they can chart their own course.

We established the annual Agri-Food Summit to bring together producers, processors, retailers, researchers, environmentalists and sector associations to focus on the future of agriculture and food in Ontario.

We established the Minister’s Strategic Advisory Committee made up of 16 members from the agriculture industry to provide vision and direction following the 2006 Premier’s Agri-Food Summit.

To consult and provide advice on land-use initiatives, we established the Agricultural Advisory Team. The advice gathered from the team led to revisions of Ontario’s land use policies to protect agricultural lands and support farming.

The 2007 budget included $843 million for eligible municipalities through the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) — a ten per cent increase over 2006. The OMPF assists municipalities with their share of social program costs, included equalization measures for areas with limited property assessment, addresses challenges faced by northern and rural communities, and responds to policing costs in rural communities.
We promised to tap into the extraordinary potential of rural Ontario. We promised to create economic opportunity and invest in the future prosperity of rural Ontario.

We’ve created a $520 million Ontario Ethanol Growth Fund designed to encourage the development of ethanol plants in Ontario and bring new investment, jobs and opportunities to rural communities.

We’re investing in projects that support sustainable rural economies and community partnerships through the Rural Economic Development program. Since October 2003, 139 projects have been approved, representing a total investment of $477.4 million in rural Ontario, since 2003.

We’re delivering our five-year plan to invest in rural infrastructure such as roads, bridges, airports, schools and hospitals.

We’re making rural Ontario an attractive destination for tourists. We support cultural tourism initiatives in rural areas through 16 projects as part of the government’s Cultural Tourism Marketing Fund.

We’re promoting job growth and economic prosperity by helping communities identify opportunities for expansion and barriers faced by local businesses.

To support the infrastructure investment needs of Ontario’s municipalities, the Rural Infrastructure Investment Initiative (RIII) funded 190 community projects in 2006-2007, leading to economic development, prosperity and an enhanced quality of life in communities across the province.

Globally Competitive Agriculture

Ensuring dependable farm incomes

We promised to develop a new generation of farm safety nets.

Since 2003, we’ve provided over $1 billion in direct financial support payments to farmers, providing assistance to grains and oilseeds farmers affected by low commodity prices and cattle farmers affected by BSE export bans.

We will provide our 40 percent share of a three year Risk Management Program to support the grain and oilseed sector.

We opened a transition fund to assist tobacco growers exit the industry, and encourage economic diversification and innovation in their communities.

We promised to defend supply management.

We have strongly defended supply management within Canada and on the international stage, including two resolutions of support in the Ontario legislature. We also attended WTO conferences with supply management leaders.

We promised to help farmers manage nutrients and protect our drinking water.

We introduced nutrient management improvements to ensure requirements to protect the environment do not place a burden on farmers, or compromise our commitment to safe, clean, drinking water. We:

- Delivered $20 million under the Nutrient Management Financial Assistance Program to assist about 1,200 large livestock operations to better protect the environment and comply with regulations under the Nutrient Management Act.
- Established a Nutrient Management Standards Science Committee
✓ Committed to funding research through the nutrient management joint research program

We’re helping livestock farmers cover the costs of adhering to new nutrient management rules and protecting provincial water supplies.

We are working with communities to make sure they have the scientific information they need to support their water protection efforts.

We have also invested in new research to help ensure everyone has the information necessary to move forward with source water protection.

A competitive industry for the long term

We promised to create major new markets for Ontario agricultural products.

We’ve created a $520 million Ontario Ethanol Growth Fund designed to encourage the development of ethanol plants in Ontario and bring new investment, jobs, and opportunities to rural communities.

We launched the Ontario Biogas Systems Financial Assistance Program to help farmers and rural businesses install biogas systems.

We’re researching ways to turn Ontario’s harvest — such as wheat, corn, soybeans and forest biomass — into viable materials for the auto industry through the BioCar Initiative.

The Ontario BioAuto Council will help move these emerging technologies into the marketplace and attract jobs and investment.

The Premier’s Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence recognizes that farmers have always been innovative in the running of their businesses and will foster even greater innovation across the province’s agri-food sector.

We promised to make research work for Ontario farmers.

We created the new Institute for Agri-Food Policy Innovation to develop recommendations for long-term policy benefits to improve the quality of life of all Ontarians.

We transferred ownership of three colleges and 14 research stations to the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario to promote new investment in Ontario’s agri-food research facilities.

We launched annual Premier’s Summits on Agri-Food, bringing together representatives from across the sector and producing new initiatives in branding and marketing, research and innovation, and bio-economy development.

We promised to aggressively market the quality and safety of Ontario food products to the world.

We are committed to working with the industry to increase consumer awareness and demand for the fresh, high-quality food produced in Ontario. That’s why we launched the popular Pick Ontario Freshness marketing strategy. We are also working with a number of Ontario Agri-Food organizations on marketing initiatives for Ontario farm products.

We promised to prohibit the unionization of primary agriculture.

We have maintained the legislation that prohibits the unionization of primary agriculture.

We promised to guarantee a strong Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food sits on the important Planning and Priorities cabinet committee.

We are re-investing in research and development, initiating a strong branding and marketing campaign to encourage the purchase of Ontario foods.
Growing Strong Rural Communities

and providing more funding than ever in direct support payments to Ontario Farmers.

We promised to make expert assistance available to farmers, on the ground.

We are re-investing in research and innovation. For example, when the Circovirus was detected in the hog industry, OMAFRA added veterinary support to work with the pork sector to study, manage and control this disease.

We promised to consult with the industry.

We established the annual Agri-Food Summit to bring together producers, processors, retailers, researchers, environmentalists and sector associations to focus on the future of agriculture and food in Ontario.

We established the Minister’s Strategic Advisory Committee, made up of 16 members from across the agriculture industry to provide vision and direction following the 2006 Premier’s Agri-Food Summit.

We established the Agricultural Advisory Team to consult and provide advice on land-use initiatives. Advice from the team led to revisions to the Provincial Policy Statement which ensure Ontario’s land use policies protect agricultural lands and support farming.

Rural Economic Opportunity

Better education in rural communities

We promised to respond to the education needs of rural communities.

Under our new school valuation policy, no funding or closure decisions are made without considering the importance of schools to their community and the local economy.

We recognize that rural schools face challenges such as declining enrolment and higher costs for materials and resources. That’s why we’re delivering special purpose grants to recognize the additional costs of school boards in our rural communities.

Funding for students of rural boards has increased by $590 million as of 2007-2008 — that means $2,439 more per student, an increase of more than 32 per cent.

We created a School Foundation Grant to provide a secretary and principal in every school.

We increased funding for transportation of rural students by 19 per cent.

We’re helping schools eliminate the fees youth and community groups pay to use Ontario’s schools after hours through the Community Use of Schools program.

Adjustments have been made to the funding formula to recognize the higher costs of building new additions and schools in rural and remote areas. Rural boards are receiving school improvement construction funding for their high and urgent renewal needs thanks to the Good Places to Learn program.

Funding was provided province-wide for an Energy Retrofit to help schools become more energy efficient.

Additional funding was provided on a per-school basis for school libraries to replenish their resources.

Some boards have declining enrolment and their revenues tend to go down more quickly than costs. That’s why we provide a Declining Enrolment Adjustment (DEA) to support these boards as they adjust.

Rural boards will also benefit from the new Supported School allocation for schools that have low enrolment and are a significant distance from other schools in the board.
We promised to protect rural schools.

We put a moratorium on school closures in 2003. In October 2006, we introduced an important tool for parents and communities — new guidelines outlining the process school boards must follow when considering closing a school. These guidelines ensure a transparent process and require that school boards carefully consider a school’s value to its students, the community and the local economy.

We promised to invest in public education.

We increased education funding by $3.7 billion, or 29 per cent per student. This funding means more resources, and flexibility in responding to local needs through funding measures such as the Learning Opportunities, Remote and Rural, Declining Enrolment and English as a Second Language grants. We increased funding to each grant.

We've introduced new grants allowing school boards to respond to local needs, including:

1. Program Enhancement Grant: supports programs and activities such as arts, music, physical education and outdoor education. Each board has the flexibility to decide how to use this funding to best suit its students’ needs.

2. Supported Schools Allocation: expands school-based support for small Ontario communities where schools have low enrolment and are a significant distance from other schools in the same board. This additional funding will benefit 177 schools.

3. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement: supports the goal of improved achievement for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. This grant helps boards offer and expand Native Language and Native Studies courses and support programs that assist aboriginal students.

4. School foundation Grant: helps put small and rural schools on an equal footing with larger schools by ensuring that every school has a principal and secretary, regardless of the number of students enrolled.

Better health care in rural communities

We promised to ensure the quality of early childhood care for all Ontario families.

We met our goal of creating 22,000 new childcare spaces for Ontario families, including spaces in 40 new schools. These spaces will be sustained for the next four years.

So that more low and middle-income families will qualify for childcare subsidies, we also delivered a new childcare funding model. We increased the deduction limit for informal childcare for social assistance recipients from $390 to $600 per month per child to provide another childcare option for working parents.

Better health care in rural communities

We promised to attract more doctors and nurses to rural Ontario with our Family Health Centres.

We are delivering 150 Family Health Teams and half are located in underserviced communities. Each team includes doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners and other health care professionals, including dieticians all working together to see more patients and keep them healthy.

We’re helping under-serviced communities attract doctors through the 2004 Ontario Medical Association agreement that offers premiums to encourage physicians to practice in these communities. We also introduced new funding to support hospital-based specialists in the North.

We’re supporting nursing students interested in practising in rural, remote or under-serviced communities by helping with their tuition costs. We
more than doubled the number of training and assessment positions for foreign-trained doctors to 200 annually. Every international medical graduate position participant must practise in underserviced areas for five years in return for their assessment or training.

We are supporting registered nurses training to become nurse practitioners and fill vacant positions, many of which are located in rural and remote communities through our Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner program.

**We promised to improve long-term care for our seniors.**

We invested in services for seniors and persons with disabilities, to allow them to stay independent in their own homes longer. Services include meals on wheels, transportation services, caregiver respite and 24-hour assisted living in supportive housing.

We are also running the Falls Prevention Seminar series to help seniors live safe, active and independent lives.

With the number of seniors expected to double over the next 25 years, it’s time to strengthen long-term care, so we increased annual funding for long-term care homes by almost $800 million.

We delivered new legislation to improve treatment in long-term care homes. The Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007, includes:

- A requirement that long-term care homes meet new staffing and care standards that will be set in regulation to provide the best possible care to residents
- Whistle-blowing protection for staff, residents and volunteers who report abuse or neglect
- An enhanced and more enforceable Residents’ Bill of Rights
- A requirement that a registered nurse be on-site and on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Restricting the use of restraints to limited circumstances where it is absolutely necessary and only with appropriate safeguards
- Defined licence terms for long-term care homes of up to 25 years; licences can be revoked in cases of non-compliance

We funded new staff, including 1,200 more nurses and we introduced surprise annual home inspections for long-term care homes.

We delivered a five-year strategy to combat elder abuse and extended the strategy for an additional two years. We provided grants to 61 community organizations working to prevent elder abuse and are continuing this investment in the current fiscal year.

We are implementing Ontario’s Strategy for Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementias.

And we are listening to the views of Ontarians through a new Citizen’s Council on the social impact of drug policies and priorities.

**Stronger rural communities**

**We promised to invest in rural roads and bridges.**

Ontario’s families and businesses are connected through our roads and bridges. So far, we have announced investments in 120 rural communities to enhance and renew Ontario’s public infrastructure: 177 road and bridge projects were approved in 87 municipalities and 35 water and wastewater projects were approved in 30 municipalities.

We delivered an investment to help rural communities with their infrastructure needs. The program was structured to allow communities to determine their own priorities, including how and when to spend the funding. It was provided immediately so high priority projects could be undertaken as soon as possible.
We promised to make our rural communities safe.

We’re working with 11 rural communities to assist them with crime prevention and community safety efforts, through the Safer Communities Grant Programs.

There are 1,000 new police officers in Ontario communities thanks to the Safer Communities-1,000 Officers Partnership Program.

There are an additional 60 officers fighting guns and gangs outside of Toronto and 200 new officers will be added to OPP ranks.

We promised to make water in rural communities safe.

We implemented every recommendation of the Walkerton Inquiry.

We now require communities to protect their municipal drinking water supplies with locally driven, science-based protection plans. We passed what the Sierra Legal Defence Fund called the toughest Clean Water Act in Canada.

We hired 33 drinking water inspectors to enforce new clean drinking water rules.

We expanded the water-monitoring network. There are now 462 monitoring locations — 100 more since 2003.

And we passed the You Spill, You Pay bill that means industrial polluters will be fined up to $100,000 each day they do not meet provincial standards.

We promised to stop allowing companies to raid our precious water supplies for free.

We are protecting our rivers and lakes from massive diversions of water and imposing a charge, for the first time, on commercial and industrial users.

We promised to put an end to dictatorial municipal amalgamations from Queen’s Park.

We have not ordered any municipal amalgamations since we were elected in 2003.

We recognize that in diverse municipalities there are many decisions that are best made at the local level. That’s why our government passed the new Municipal Act, which allows municipal councils to delegate some powers to community councils.

We promised to guarantee stable, long-term funding for our rural communities.

We signed the Agricultural Policy Framework with the federal government to invest in and support Ontario’s agri-food sector over five years.

In 2007, the OMAFRA budget was the largest ever.

We funded 280 projects across Ontario to improve rural infrastructure over the next five years.

Ontario and Canada will work together to help eligible municipalities and Local Service Boards with asset management planning.

We’re working with municipalities to assist with road and bridge maintenance and construction projects.

We doubled funding for the Rural Infrastructure Investment Initiative to help 190 rural and small municipalities provide safe and reliable local infrastructure.

We’re also helping to expand broadband internet coverage in rural southern Ontario by leveraging community and private-sector investment.

The 2007 budget included $843 million for eligible municipalities through the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) — a ten per cent increase over 2006. The OMPF assists municipalities with their share of social pro-
gram costs, included equalization measures for areas with limited property assessment, addresses challenges faced by northern and rural communities, and responds to policing costs in rural communities.

A strong economy for all

We promised to hold the line on taxes.

The Conservative government left behind a hidden $5.6 billion deficit. We introduced the health premium so we could make critical investments in our health care system. And we passed a law to ensure that no government ever again can hide a deficit from the public.

We legislated a plan to eliminate the capital tax and we announced our plan to lower high business education taxes across the province.

We promised not to raise the debt.

When we were elected in 2003 we faced tough financial challenges. In 2006-2007 we had a small reduction in the accumulated deficit and, in fact, Ontario’s net debt decreased this year by $800 million, and our debt-to-GDP ratio is at its lowest in 13 years.

Most recently, in August 2007, we announced a $2.3 billion surplus — this surplus will be put towards paying down Ontario’s debt.

We promised to bring stability to Ontario’s electricity market.

We're bringing new electricity on line, providing secure, reliable power for Ontario’s families and businesses.

We also directed the Ontario Power Authority to take Ontario off coal in the quickest possible time frame.

Our 20 year energy plan ensures the lights will stay on through a balanced mix of nuclear, renewables and conservation.

Restoring Democracy

We promised to respect the views of rural constituents by giving their MPPs free votes.

Governing party MPPs are now allowed to vote against government legislation, with the exception of platform commitments and confidence matters.

We promised to stop the waste of taxpayer dollars.

We have exceeded our efficiency savings target of $750 million — total efficiencies and savings have reached $806 million.

To date 1,061 jobs that used to be done by high-priced consultants are now done in house. It is anticipated this will help save about $40 million a year.

We passed the Government Advertising Act, the first of its kind in North America. It bans taxpayer funded partisan advertising and requires the office of the Auditor General to review government advertising before it is released to the public. Already, annual government advertising spending is down by an average of 33 per cent.

We’re introducing paperless pay stubs that will save about $600,000 a year in printing and delivery costs.

Bulk purchasing to take advantage of best prices is also saving taxpayers’ money.
CHANGE IN PROGRESS

We promised to build North America’s best workforce.

We passed legislation that requires students to stay involved in a learning environment until age 18 or graduation, and to allow school boards and the Minister to enter into agreements with business, community and other groups to offer a full range of programs to students.

We delivered the Reaching Higher Plan, a historic, multi-year investment in post-secondary education — the largest in 40 years. So far, we’ve created more than 86,000 additional spaces in our post-secondary institutions.

We signed the historic Labour Market Development Agreement giving Ontarians access to enhanced training and employment services.

In our first three years we doubled the number of new apprentices registered annually:

In 2006-2007, we registered 25,469 new apprentices and we look forward to an expected 26,000 new apprentices in 2007-2008.

We promised to improve education in the early grades.

Ontario’s youngest students are getting the attention they need in classes of 20 or fewer students. We funded over 5,100 new teachers to reduce class sizes. And parents can now track class sizes online at www.ontario.ca/classsizes.

We are on track to ensure that 90 per cent of primary classes have 20 or fewer students this coming fall and the number of classes with 25 or more students has virtually disappeared — dropping from 25 to three per cent over the past three years. We’re confident we can make even more progress for Ontario’s youngest learners.

We also:

- Provided literacy and numeracy summer training courses for 17,000 teachers from 2004-2006 — another 7,000 are expected to participate in 2007
- Provided reading training courses for 12,000 teachers and principals in 2005-2006
- Provided Differentiated Instruction training courses for 26,000 teachers and principals in 2005-2006 to reach all students in every learning style
- Invested in tutoring programs across the province

OVER AND ABOVE

Training Colleges and Universities

Post-Secondary Opportunities for Rural Ontarians

We’re making it easier for students to take college and university courses without having to travel a long way to a post-secondary institution. Through audioconference, videoconference, and e-learning technologies in Access Centres, students can complete courses without having to leave their communities. Five Access Centres have been established in small and rural communities including Orléans, Wallaceburg, Bruce County and Hastings County.

Attracting Youth to Science and Technology

We’re promoting science awareness activities to at-risk youth and youth living in rural and remote communities. The Youth Science and Technology Outreach Program motivates and encourages youth to develop an interest in science and technology.

We’re also giving Ontario teachers the opportunity to spend two to four weeks working on research in publicly funded research institutions to
help them motivate and encourage their students’ interest in science and technology.

**Agriculture**

**Protection for Agricultural Workers**

We brought agricultural workers under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to better protect farm workers. These protections include offshore migrant workers.

**Ontario Wine Industry**

We partnered with our wineries and breweries to come up with ways to enhance the tourism experience for our visitors. New regulations under the Liquor Licence Act allow wineries and breweries to sell individual servings of their products to visitors at production sites.

We continue to support Ontario’s internationally recognized and respected wine industry.

**Juice Grape Growers**

In 2007, we announced help for juice grape growers to adjust to a changing marketplace while maintaining the health of the grape sector in the Niagara region. We’re helping juice grape growers remove the grapevines from their acreage to protect the plant health of the remaining vineyards in the region.

**Beekeeping Industry**

Six weeks of bitter cold in January and February of 2007 wiped out 22,000 bee hives — almost 30 per cent of Ontario’s honey bee population. We provided funding to help the sector recover.

**Reducing Taxes for Farmers**

We protected the viability of family farming in the province by exempting the land transfer tax for farms that change ownership between members of the same family.

**Rural Summer Jobs Service**

We connected 16,000 students with summer jobs in rural Ontario. This has helped rural students enhance their skills and gain valuable experience.

**Farmers’ Markets**

We’re strengthening rural communities by helping farmers’ markets prosper. Farmers’ markets bring shoppers to our communities and also promote Ontario’s fresh fruits and vegetables.

**BSE Funding**

We’ve stood by our farmers throughout the BSE crisis. We’ve committed funding to help agri-food industry farmers deal with the BSE crisis — combined with federal funding, the Ontario livestock industry has received over $398 million for BSE programs.

We’re also working with the Ontario Cattlemen’s Association to maintain Ontario’s deadstock collection system, and we expanded our domestic slaughter capacity.

**Energy**

**Standard Offer**

We introduced the Clean Energy Standard Offer Program that encourages the development of community-based renewable energy projects. It allows rural landowners, community groups, First Nations, business owners and municipalities to sell their energy to the grid at a fixed price.
Achieving Our Potential

The Ontario Liberal Plan for Economic Growth
In a world where technology can be copied, capital can be borrowed and resources can be bought, the only way forward is through education and innovation. A first rate health care system combined with top-notch public education, good roads, reliable energy and, most importantly, talented people are the building blocks of a strong economy.

The Conservatives left Ontario with a hidden $5.6 billion deficit. They let our electricity supply run dangerously low, let our infrastructure grow dangerously old and refused to partner with our leading sectors — most notably the auto industry, leaving us unable to compete for the best jobs.

When we were elected in 2003, we laid out our plan to strengthen Ontario’s economy. We focused on working with the private sector to attract investment to Ontario. We aimed to build a quality of life in Ontario that would attract investment and talent. And we built strong relationships with emerging powers in the global economy.

We've built a stronger, more innovative economy but there’s still more to do.

**CHANGE THAT’S WORKING**

**Achieving Our Potential**

**We promised to balance the budget, keep taxes down, manage prudently and invest in higher productivity and a better quality of life.**

We balanced the Budget in 2005-2006, and again in 2006-2007. We are on track to post five consecutive balanced budgets.

Our yearly progress reports show we are managing prudently. We’ve also created over $800 million in savings, surpassing our target of $750 million.

We are delivering a better quality of life for Ontarians through our investments in healthcare, education, and infrastructure.

Because of the deficit we inherited, we made the choice to introduce a health premium. As a result we are delivering better health care for a better quality of life.

At the same time, we introduced a plan to reduce high business education taxes by more than half a billion dollars.

There are hundreds of thousands more Ontarians working today than there were in 2003. Over this same period, the unemployment rate has fallen from seven per cent to 6.6 per cent as of July 2007. Of these net new jobs, more than 80 per cent are full-time.

**We promised to invest in our colleges and universities, leverage our diverse population into an economic advantage and keep our people learning and earning for life.**

We’re making record investments in our post-secondary students and facilities — the largest in 40 years. We’re delivering:

- A strategy to attract more international students and encourage study abroad for Ontario students
- More access to labour market services for new Canadians and prospective apprentices
- An expanded Bridge Training program to provide training and work experience for skilled new Canadians
- Better access to college training and jobs for new Canadian students
- Pilot programs to help employers better recognize and use the skills of new Canadians
We promised to support our key business clusters with smart investments in strong, sustainable growth.

We identified four main business clusters and we’re making progress in each: Automotive, Manufacturing, Agriculture and Research and Innovation.

We’re providing skills training for our workers, better environmental and energy technologies, public infrastructure and investments in research and innovation through the Ontario Auto Investment Strategy. The auto strategy has leveraged over $7 billion in auto investment in the last three years and created or sustained over 7,000 jobs.

We’re encouraging manufacturing companies to invest in leading-edge technologies and processes to increase productivity and competitiveness through the Advanced Manufacturing Investment Strategy. It is a repayable loan program and so far, projects announced will generate $670 million in new investments and help create or keep about 4,000 jobs over five years.

We signed the Agricultural Policy Framework with the federal government to invest in and support Ontario’s agri-food sector over five years.

We also created the Ministry of Research and Innovation and we’re investing in research, commercialization and outreach programs to make sure Ontario’s good ideas get to market first.

We promised to build on our U.S. trade ties, open new global markets and aggressively pursue foreign direct investment.

The Ontario Liberal government has been so successful that Foreign Direct Investment magazine named Premier McGuinty “Personality of the Year” for encouraging investment in the auto sector, developing a plan to increase energy production, and promoting research and innovation.

We executed a foreign investment strategy and in 2005-2006 alone, attracted 7,260 jobs through 30 investment deals valued at over $950 million.

We led business missions to India, Pakistan, China, Germany, Austria, Japan, Italy, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Scandinavia giving Ontario businesses the opportunity to connect directly with global markets.

We created partnerships around the world: Maharashtra, India; New Jersey, USA; Baden-Wuerttemberg, Germany; Jiangsu Province, China; Antofagasta Region, Chile; Punjab, Pakistan; Lombardi, Italy; Portugal; and Israel.

We announced seven new International Marketing Centres to showcase our province and workforce to the world: Tokyo, London, Los Angeles, New Delhi, Beijing, Paris and Mexico City. The Toyota auto assembly investment in Woodstock that’s creating 2,000 jobs was the hallmark of the government’s foreign direct investment strategy.

Running A Tight Ship

Competitive and fair taxes

We promised to live by the balanced budget law.

The Conservative government left behind a hidden $5.6 billion deficit.

Now, we are on track to post five consecutive balanced budgets. We brought transparency and accountability to how we manage our finances by broadening the powers of the Auditor General, requiring quarterly reporting and the release of a Pre-election Report so that no government will be able to hide a deficit like the previous government did.
Getting results

We promised to give the provincial auditor enhanced powers to protect taxpayers.

We expanded the auditor’s powers to conduct value-for-money audits of institutions in the public sector, such as school boards, universities, colleges, hospitals, and all Crown-controlled corporations including Hydro One, Inc., and Ontario Power Generation, Inc.

Now the Auditor General must report on the state of the province’s finances before an election.

Building North America’s Best Workforce

Higher education, high productivity

We promised that no double cohort student would be shut out.

Thanks to the new student access guarantee, students in need will have access to the resources for tuition, books and mandatory fees. No qualified Ontario student will be prevented from attending Ontario’s colleges and universities because they can’t afford it.

We promised to expand our post-secondary capacity by at least 10 per cent over five years.

Since 2002-2003, over 86,000 more students have enrolled in Ontario’s universities — a 22 per cent increase. Each of these new spaces was fully-funded by the McGuinty government.

We promised to immediately freeze college and university tuition for at least two years.

We froze tuition for two years. After the freeze, post-secondary institutions were limited to five per cent tuition increases.

We promised to improve financial help for students.

So more students can get the aid they need, we’re investing twice as much in the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP).

Through the Ontario Student Opportunity Grant, students can get even more aid, while their OSAP debt continues to be limited to $7,000 per completed year.

We opened the door to financial aid for students from middle-income families so they can now qualify for thousands of dollars of assistance.

We’re introducing a website to provide information on sources of financial aid available to students in the institutions and programs of their choice.

2006-2007 Changes to Student Financial Aid:

- We are extending eligibility for access grants to students from families earning up to $75,000 per year — roughly the median income of Ontario families. About 6,000 students are expected to receive these access grants in 2006-2007.

- We will continue to deliver the highest grants to students from the lowest-income families. Access grants can cover up to half the cost of tuition for students from low-income families. In their first year, these students can also qualify for matching federal grants to cover their full tuition.

- Crown wards receive access grants in first and second year and, starting in 2008, will also receive access grants in third and fourth year.
achieving our potential

students whose parents earn above $36,440 per year but below $75,000 per year are now eligible for grants covering from 25 to 50 per cent of their tuition.

we are updating the book and supply allowances: arts and science textbook allowances increased 54 per cent; and textbook allowances for specialized programs went up 138 per cent.

2005-2006 changes to student financial aid:

✓ we introduced access grants for first-year and second-year students from low-income families.

✓ we increased maximum assistance levels so that single students are eligible for as much as $2,550 more in student aid (a 27 per cent increase).

✓ we reduced the amount of money middle-income parents are expected to contribute to their children’s education. for example, a family of four, earning $70,000 with one child in university is now saving about $2,000.

✓ we introduced an annual allowance for computer and computer-related expenditures.

✓ we helped with loan repayments by increasing the income thresholds for interest relief by five per cent so more graduates qualify for this assistance.

2004-2005 changes to student financial aid:

✓ we considered students to be independent of parents four years after leaving high school, instead of five.

✓ we helped with loan repayments by introducing a debt-reduction repayment program that reduces debt to an affordable level for those having long-term difficulties repaying.

✓ we are creating endowments at universities that provide fellowships for outstanding graduate students.

✓ we set up a fund to match private donations to college and university student aid endowment funds.

we promised to help ontario’s neediest students with tuition waivers.

no qualified ontario student will be prevented from attending ontario’s colleges and universities because they can’t afford it. students in need will have access to the resources they need for their tuition, books and mandatory fees.

we introduced direct grants for students from low-income families to cover up to half of their tuition costs. if they are in first year, these students can also qualify for matching federal grants to cover their full tuition.

now one in four students are receiving direct grants.

sharper skills for a strong economy

we promised to create a rapid re-employment and training project.

job-threatened or laid off workers will benefit from better coordination thanks to our rapid re-employment and training service. this service gives workers access to lifelong learning to meet changing workplace demands and employers the ability to find the workers they need more easily. we opened the first re-employment action centre in february 2007.

we promised to create an employee training tax credit.

for the first three years of training in designated skilled trades, the apprenticeship training tax credit allows employers to claim up to $5,000 each year to a total of $15,000 for each eligible apprentice.
We promised to double the number of our apprentices over five years.

In our first three years we doubled the number of new apprentices registered annually.

In 2006-2007, we registered 25,469 new apprentices and we look forward to an expected 26,000 new apprentices in 2007-2008.

Expanding the winners’ circle

We promised to put our immigration brain gain to work.

We’re putting our brain gain to work with our plan, Breaking Down Barriers.

In Ontario, our Fair Access to Professions Act means a fair, open and timely licensing process to assess the credentials of foreign trained professionals.

We established the Office of the Fairness Commissioner who is responsible for evaluating registration and licensing practices.

We created Global Experience Ontario, an access centre for internationally trained workers that will be a one-stop resource centre to help enter regulated professions and promote internships and mentoring programs.

Employers can now nominate individuals for immigration based on market needs because we launched Ontario’s first-ever pilot Provincial Nominee Program.

We’ve placed 72 newcomers in 15 Ministries in fields such as chemistry, environment, health and business administration. Many newcomers face the same frustrating roadblock — they can’t get a job without Canadian work experience and they can’t get Canadian work experience if they don’t get a job. We’re helping to clear a path with the first-ever Internship Program for Internationally Trained Individuals.

We expanded services to create three new Job Connect centres in Brampton, Markham and Toronto. We expanded services for newcomers in Peel Region, York Region and Toronto.

We created Newcomer Employment Networks in London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Niagara and Ottawa, facilitating partnership between community organizations and the business sector to promote the value of hiring newcomers.

We’re helping thousands of newcomers in 100 trades and professions in over 90 Bridge Training projects.

We promised to remove barriers that prevent foreign-trained professionals and skilled workers from reaching their potential.

In Ontario, our 34 regulated professions now have a fair, open and timely licensing process to assess the credentials of foreign trained professionals.

We established the Office of the Fairness Commissioner to evaluate registration and licensing practices.

We created Global Experience Ontario, an Access Centre for Internationally Trained Individuals that serves as a one-stop resource centre to help these workers enter regulated professions and promotes internships and mentoring programs.

We are providing English-as-a-Second Language and French-as-a-Second Language classes for adult newcomers, including occupation-specific language training.

We launched the first-ever Internship Program for Internationally Trained Individuals in the Ontario Public Service where 72 newcomers have been placed in 15 Ministries in fields such as chemistry, environment, health and business administration.

We created Newcomer Employment Networks in London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Niagara and Ottawa where community organizations partner with the business sector to promote the value of hiring newcomers.
We’re helping thousands of newcomers in 100 trades and professions in over 90 Bridge Training projects.

We promised to end the Harris-Eves 60-hour work week and raise the minimum wage for the first time since 1995 … we promised to increase the minimum wage to $8 over four years.

We ended the 60-hour work week on March 1, 2005.

We also increased the minimum wage four times, bringing it to $8 an hour. Under our plan, the minimum wage is on track to reach $10.25 by 2010.

We promised to make workfare work.

We raised social assistance rates for three consecutive years for a total increase of seven per cent. We also removed barriers that were keeping people from employment, and provided more supports to help people find and keep jobs. For instance:

✓ We simplified rules around earnings exemptions, so the more you work, the more money you keep
✓ We extended drug, dental and vision care benefits for people leaving social assistance for employment
✓ To provide another childcare option for working parents, we increased the maximum deduction for informal childcare costs from $390 to $600 per month per child
✓ To help people on social assistance who are also employed, we created new employment benefits to help pay for job-related costs
✓ We launched pilot programs to test employment supports to help people on social assistance move to sustainable paid employment

✓ We’re working with employers to expand job opportunities for people on social assistance, including people with disabilities, by launching a new Employment Innovations Fund
✓ We’re engaging employers in expanding sustainable job opportunities for people with disabilities by establishing the Employer Outreach Secretariat.

This means single parents can pursue a better life for themselves and their children without having to worry about losing the benefits that come with social assistance. It is no longer a risk to be employed.

Building A More Innovative Economy

Gearing up: a new automotive strategy

We promised to create an auto sector strategic investment fund.

We’re providing skills training for our workers, better environmental and energy technologies, public infrastructure and investments in research and innovation through the Ontario Auto Investment Strategy. The auto strategy has leveraged over $7 billion in auto investment in the last 3 years and created over 7,000 jobs.

We promised to create innovative training programs to help workers upgrade their skills.

We’re making it easier to hire and train new apprentices with the Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit.

We’re enhancing existing services, helping new Canadians fully participate in our growing economy, and linking prospective apprentices with employers. We are expanding employment and training services through Job Connect.
We're cutting red tape and getting workers affected by layoffs or closures the training they need to quickly get back into the workforce. We're bringing together a full range of Ontario labour market services to match workers affected by layoffs with new job opportunities in their communities.

And we delivered skills training to help bring investment to rural communities.

We promised to work with the automotive industry.

We're providing skills training for our workers, better environmental and energy technologies, public infrastructure and investments in research and innovation through our Ontario Auto Investment Strategy. The auto strategy has created over 7,000 jobs and leveraged over $7 billion in auto investment in the last 3 years:

- $1 billion – Ford: Oakville
- $1.1 billion – Toyota: Woodstock
- $2.5 billion – GM: Oshawa, Ingersol and St. Catharines
- $154 million – Honda: Alliston
- $768 million – Chrysler: Windsor and Brampton
- $93 million – Valiant: Windsor
- $50 million – Toyotastu: Simcoe
- $1.1 billion – Linamar: Guelph
- $100 million – Nemak: Windsor
- $270 million – Navistar: Windsor and Chatham

North American auto manufacturers face increased global competition. We in Ontario are not immune to that. We are committed to working with our automotive partners as they overcome these challenges and we are proud of the fact that Ontario continues to be the number one auto producer in North America.

We promised to build automotive expertise in government.

We created, staffed and supported a dedicated Automotive Strategies Branch within government to provide expert advice in the auto sector. We’re taking a more pro-active policy role in advocating for the industry.

Sowing the seeds of innovation: globally competitive agriculture and food

We promised to get the fundamentals right, with a new generation of safety nets and a strong defence of supply management.

Since 2003, we’ve provided over $1 billion in direct financial support payments to farmers, providing assistance to grains and oilseeds farmers affected by low commodity prices, and cattle farmers affected by BSE export bans.

We are providing our 40 per cent share of a three year Risk Management Program to support the grain and oilseed sector, starting with the 2007 crop year. We developed this program through discussions with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and representatives of the grain and oilseed sector.

We have strongly defended supply management within Canada and on the international stage, including two resolutions of support in the Ontario legislature. We also attended WTO conferences with supply management leaders.

We have pressed the federal government to support consultations on the future of business risk management programs as part of the development of the Next Generation of Agricultural Policy Framework.
And we’re helping livestock farmers cover the costs of new nutrient management rules and protecting provincial water supplies.

We promised to provide financial assistance to farmers to help offset the cost of new nutrient management rules.

We’re helping livestock farmers cover the costs of new nutrient management rules and protecting provincial water supplies.

**Nutrient management**

We promised to make sure Ontario stays at the forefront of world innovation in agricultural research and that this research works to help Ontario farmers.

We created the new Institute for Agri-Food Policy Innovation to develop recommendations for long-term policy benefits to improve the quality of life of all Ontarians.

We transferred ownership of three colleges and 14 research stations to the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario to promote new investment in Ontario’s agri-food research facilities.

To provide farmers with business management skills, we launched the Agricultural Management Institute in partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

We partnered with the federal government to strengthen links between producers and consumers, keep up with advancements in life sciences and bioproducts, and stay on top of opportunities related to new trends in healthy living.

We completed a series of Premier’s Summits on Agri-Food, bringing together representatives from across the sector and producing new initiatives in branding and marketing, research and innovation, and bio-economy development.

We promised to better market the safety and quality of Ontario food products.

After the tainted meat scandal under the Conservatives, we appointed Mr. Justice Roland J. Haines to examine Ontario’s meat regulation and inspection system and review the existing legislative scheme.

We met Justice Haines’ first recommendation through the Food Safety and Quality Act. Under the act, meat regulations are now stronger. We improved Ontario’s meat inspection system by hiring 71 more full-time and 62 part-time meat inspectors. We’re assisting meat processors to meet the new regulations.

We are funding the Animal Health Laboratory at the University of Guelph to prevent and respond to animal disease threats. In April 2005, we announced the creation of the position Chief Veterinarian of Ontario (CVO). The CVO takes the lead in animal health or related food safety emergencies. The creation of this position was in direct response to one of the recommendations by Mr. Justice Haines.

We created an Ontario livestock and poultry traceability system to help the province’s agri-food industry strengthen emergency management and capitalize on market opportunities.

We are committed to working with the industry to increase consumer awareness and demand for the fresh, high-quality food produced in Ontario. That’s why we launched the popular Pick Ontario Freshness marketing strategy. We are also working with a number of Ontario Agri-Food organizations on marketing initiatives for Ontario farm products.

**Growing Ontario’s small businesses**

We promised to hold the line on small business taxes.

We have held the line on small business taxes and even reduced them with our changes to the business education tax.
We promised to reduce the bureaucratic workload for small business.

We are well on our way towards our goal of reducing 24 per cent of forms for small business in key ministries.

We launched the e-MBL service guarantee so Ontarians can apply for their master business license online. An electronic copy of their license is sent in two-days or they get their money back.

Several Business Information Bundles are available through the Service-Ontario website. It’s one-stop access to compliance information and assistance tools, tailored to meet the unique challenges faced by small business owners.

We’ve also reduced the paper burden small businesses face dealing with the provincial government.

Strengthening our innovation advantage

We promised to help bring good ideas to market.

We created the Ministry of Research and Innovation to get good ideas to market with research, commercialization and outreach programs.

We developed a strategy to turn Ontario’s great ideas into world-class products and services. Our strategy includes:

1. Demonstrating new bio-based, environmental, or alternative energy technologies

2. Providing high-potential innovative companies in Ontario with early-stage financial support and management expertise to help them get off the ground and attract investment from other sources

Our Early-Stage Venture Capital fund invests in early stage Ontario-based firms partnering with venture capital funds, pension funds and the federal government.

Our contribution to MaRS has brought businesses, venture capitalists and researchers all under one roof to help move discoveries from the lab to the marketplace more quickly.

Ontario’s Centres for Excellence promote the economic development of Ontario through directed research, commercialization of technology and training for highly qualified personnel.

We promised to improve our competitive advantage in health care.

We know health care is a strong economic advantage. Companies want to invest in places where the workforce is healthy and educated. That’s why we’re developing a 10-year strategic plan for the Province’s health care system.

We added three new free vaccines to the children’s immunization program, saving the average family up to $600 per child.

We permitted generic drug substitution to create substantial savings for employer drug plans.

We introduced a strategy to reduce wait times in five key areas of disease and disability: cancer and cataract surgeries, cardiac procedures, hip and knee replacements and MRI/CT scans. We’ve saved more than 18 million days of waiting since August 2005.
Building A Truly Global Ontario

A secure, diverse trade environment

We promised to target infrastructure funding at border crossings.

We’re partnering with the federal government to improve traffic flow at border crossings and deal with congestion at the Windsor-Detroit Gateway.

We’re also partnering to improve highways and border crossings in Sarnia, Niagara and London.

We invested, with the federal government, in cameras and electronic message signs to save drivers time and improve driver safety on the Blue Water Bridge and on Highway 402 in Sarnia leading to the United States border.

We promised to do our part to maintain a secure border.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) monitors traffic, weather, road and border conditions so officials can respond quickly and provide real-time information on border conditions to help travelers plan their trips. We signed an agreement with Michigan to improve border safety and keep traffic moving across the Ontario-Michigan border through ITS technology.

We promised to leverage our diversity to attract investment.

We executed a foreign investment strategy and in 2005-2006 alone, attracted 7,260 jobs through 30 investment deals valued at over $950 million.

We led business missions to India, Pakistan, China, Germany, Austria, Japan, Italy, the United Kingdom, the United States and Scandinavia, giving Ontario businesses the opportunity to connect directly with global markets.

We created partnerships around the world: Maharashtra, India; New Jersey, USA; Baden-Wuerttemberg, Germany; Jiangsu Province, China; Antofagasta Region, Chile; Punjab, Pakistan; Lombardi, Italy; Portugal; and Israel.

We announced seven new International Marketing Centres to showcase our province and workforce to the world: Tokyo, London, Los Angeles New Delhi, Beijing, Paris and Mexico City.

We promised to take advantage of the more than 200 consulates and embassies in Ontario.

We took advantage of our proximity to over 200 embassies and consulates and executed a foreign investment strategy. In 2006-2007, we attracted 38 deals worth $670 million supporting 8,411 jobs. In 2005-2006, we attracted 7,260 jobs through 30 investment deals valued at over $950 million as a result of the Premier’s missions to China and India.

We promised to bring the next generation of global customer-service operations to Ontario.

We have a network of International Marketing Centres positioned to bring investment to Ontario (Los Angeles, New Delhi, New York, Munich, London, Shanghai and Tokyo with Mexico City to be opened this fall). Ontario is home to many global customer-service leaders. The availability of high-end skills and infrastructure in Ontario has led to the development of a rapidly growing outsourcing sector.

India’s four largest outsourcing companies — Wipro, Infosys, TCS and Satyam — each have a significant presence in Ontario. This link has been strengthened since the Premier’s business mission to India.

In 2006-2007, we attracted 38 international investment deals worth $670 million. This investment brought 1,500 jobs in skilled sales and technical support.

We promised to market our post-secondary expertise to the world.

We promoted Ontario’s colleges and universities at key international education events, ensuring Ontario remains an important destination for students.
We recruited in:

- Russia and India: 20 Ontario institutions participated on the Russia project in February 2007, while 28 Ontario colleges and universities participated on the tour in India in September 2005
- Montreal, at the 2006 meeting of the Association for International Educators
- Switzerland, at the European Association for International Educators conference in Basel, September 2006
- Singapore, at the Asia Pacific Association for International Educators Conference in March 2007
- Minneapolis, at the 2007 meeting of the Association for International Educators.

A secure investment climate

We promised to enforce tough, transparent and fair securities regulation.

We worked with other provinces and their regulators to improve the transparency and accountability of public companies and strengthen investor confidence.

We promised to actively pursue the creation of a single national securities commission.

We consulted with experts from across the country to develop a design for a common securities regulator. We are now actively working with industry and the federal government to promote a single regulator with the other provinces.

CHANGE IN PROGRESS

We promised to ensure the debt goes in one direction only: down.

The Conservative government left behind a hidden $5.6 billion deficit that left us with challenges and tough decisions for our government regarding the province’s finances.

In 2006-2007 we had a small reduction in the accumulated deficit, and in fact, Ontario’s net debt decreased this year by $800 million, and our debt-to-GDP ratio is at its lowest in 13 years.

Most recently, in August 2007 we announced a $2.3 billion surplus — this surplus will be put towards paying down Ontario’s debt.

We promised to create a one-stop shopping web portal for small business.

We re-tooled and re-launched the Ministry of Small Business website in December 2006. We completed two pilot projects providing a one-stop web portal to review all regulatory requirements (through links to municipal, provincial and federal websites) and access required forms.

We promised to give you better value for your money, while keeping taxes down … we promised to hold the line on your taxes … corporate taxes are already competitive in Ontario. We promised to keep them that way.

The Conservative government left behind a hidden $5.6 billion deficit that left us with challenges and tough decisions for our government regarding the province’s finances.

Because of the deficit we inherited, we made the choice to introduce a health premium. As a result we are delivering better health care for a better quality of life.
We expanded the power of the Auditor General to perform value for money audits on school boards, hospitals and the broader public sector.

We will bring our annual savings to $806 million through cost savings and efficiencies by 2007-2008. The e-Ontario Strategy has identified a further $100 million in savings.

Ontario’s corporate taxes are competitive. Our corporate income tax rate is below the US average and lower than our main trading partners, the US Great Lakes states.

We also enhanced our competitiveness, by enacting legislation that will eliminate the capital tax by 2010, and legislation that will harmonize our corporate tax collection with the federal government, saving Ontario corporations $190 million annually.

We have held the line on small business taxes and even reduced them with our changes to the business education tax.

We promised to create a major new market for Ontario agricultural products by setting mandatory ethanol and biodiesel content rules for gasoline and diesel fuel.

We require each gas station across the province to average five per cent ethanol content in the fuel it sells every year.

We created the Ontario Ethanol Growth Fund to encourage the development of ethanol plants in Ontario to bring new investment, jobs, and opportunities to rural communities. It will also help improve the air we breathe.

We promised to measure every investment against results.

Every year we put out an annual progress report, outlining our plan to deliver success for students, better health and a strong economy.

We now require results-based planning across the government.

We promised to support our cities.

We are delivering provincial gas tax revenues to municipalities so they can improve their public transit systems.

We have made record investments in public transit and in our roads, bridges and highways.

We’re partnering with industry through ReNew Ontario to improve our public infrastructure such as schools and hospitals.

We created the Ontario Strategic Infrastructure Financing Authority (OSIFA) to assist communities through low interest loans to build needed infrastructure. The investments have stimulated approximately 1,200 infrastructure projects in 150 municipalities to support priorities such as clean water, sewage, waste management, road and bridge improvements, teaching and learning facilities, as well as recreational and sports facilities.

The 2007 budget included $843 million for eligible municipalities through the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) — a ten per cent increase over 2006. The OMPF assists municipalities with their share of social program costs, included equalization measures for areas with limited property assessment, addresses challenges faced by northern and rural communities, and responds to policing costs in rural communities.

We provide ongoing operating support to municipalities. We also enacted the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review to examine how services are best delivered. Some of the areas that will be examined include delivery and funding of housing, health, and social services.

We are uploading the entire municipal share of the costs for Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Drug Benefit.

We amended the Municipal Act to give local governments new and broader powers and more autonomy to reflect their status as mature, responsible governments. Through our reforms to the planning system, Ontario’s municipalities have more tools and clearer rules to help them develop the communities they want.
We increased the provincial government’s share of public health funding from 50 per cent to 75 per cent as of January 2007. We’re working hard towards achieving true 50-50 sharing of the cost of municipal land ambulance services by 2008.

We promised to make sure parents have access to affordable, quality childcare.

We met our goal of creating 22,000 new childcare spaces for Ontario families, including spaces in 40 new schools. These spaces will be sustained for the next four years.

We delivered $28 million in additional annual funding to our early childhood development programs.

We also delivered a new childcare funding model so that more low and middle-income families qualify for childcare subsidies. We increased the deduction limit for informal childcare for social assistance recipients from $390 to $600 per month per child to provide another childcare option for working parents.

We promised to offer a Pre-paid Tuition Program to make it easier for parents to save for their children’s education … by guaranteeing them today’s price for tomorrow’s education

Our focus has been on enhancing Ontario’s Student Assistance Program to help families access post-secondary education. We put our efforts into building a progressive system of student aid — the most aid goes to students who need it the most. That’s why we re-introduced upfront tuition grants.

We have focused on those who can’t afford to save by introducing upfront grants.

We promised to recruit new faculty for colleges and universities.

Our Reaching Higher Plan is a historic multi-year investment in post-secondary education — the largest in 40 years. Part of the plan is to increase faculty at colleges and universities to accommodate higher enrolment and improve student success.

We promised to invest in the next generation of researchers and professors by increasing graduate scholarships by 50 per cent.

We’ve invested 50 per cent more funding in scholarships through our Graduate Fellowships.

We are also adding more graduate school spaces and supporting new capital building projects to accommodate this increase.

OVER AND ABOVE

Training, Colleges and Universities

Highest Post-secondary Participation Rate Ever

40 per cent of 18–24 year olds are receiving post-secondary education today compared to 35 per cent in 2003-2004. Ontario’s post-secondary attainment rate is the highest in the G8, with over 54 per cent of Ontarians completing post-secondary education or training.

Improved Infrastructure at Ontario’s College and Universities

We’re supporting improvements to infrastructure and equipment at Ontario’s colleges and universities. Our investments include on-going projects as well as new capital projects.
Help Finding Summer Jobs

We invest more than $52 million annually in the Ontario Summer Jobs Strategy to help more than 70,000 students find work.

More Funding for Literacy Programming

We boosted funding to Literacy programming by 23 per cent in our first four years to reach more than 14,000 learners.

Labour Market Development Agreement with the Federal Government

When we were first elected, Ontario was the only province still relying on the federal government to administer employment and training services. We negotiated an annual program funding transfer for employment and training services from the federal government through the Labour Market Development Agreement. Now, almost one million Ontario workers and businesses benefit from expanded training and employment services through Employment Ontario.

Increased Funding for Union and Employer Training Centres

We’re helping union and employer training centres update equipment and train more workers, apprentices and journeypersons to industry standards through our investment in the Skills Training Infrastructure Program.

Research and Innovation

New Ministry of Research and Innovation

We created the new Ministry of Research and Innovation to make sure Ontario is globally competitive now, and in the future. Premier McGuinty demonstrated his commitment to this sector when he decided to lead the new ministry himself.

Ontario Research and Innovation Council

We created the Ontario Research and Innovation Council (ORIC), an expert panel that advises the Premier on building a more creative, innovative and prosperous Ontario.

Home-Grown Ideas into Home-Grown Jobs

We have a strategy to turn Ontario’s great ideas into world-class products and services. We focused on three areas:

1. Bio-based, environmental, or alternative energy technologies
2. Early-stage financial support for high-potential innovative companies to help get them off the ground and attract investment from other sources
3. Early-Stage Venture Capital fund to invest in early stage Ontario based firms partnering with venture capital funds, pension funds and the federal government

Ontario Fuel Cell Innovation Program

We’re moving Ontario’s best fuel cell technology ideas and discoveries out of the labs and transforming them into commercial products and services that can be sold worldwide.

Attracting Youth to Science and Technology

We’re promoting science awareness activities to at-risk youth and youth living in rural and remote communities. The Youth Science and Technology Outreach Program motivates and encourages youth to develop an interest in science and technology.

We’re also giving Ontario teachers the opportunity to spend two to four weeks working on research in publicly funded research institutions so they
can better motivate and encourage their students’ interest in science and technology.

**Supporting and Rewarding World-Class Research**

We created the Ontario Research Fund (ORF) to provide streamlined access to research funding. Funding is focused on priority sectors:

- Agriculture
- Emerging technologies
- Energy systems and environmental technologies
- Information and communications technologies
- Life sciences
- Materials and advanced manufacturing

The ORF is administered two ways: the Research Excellence program funds capital costs, such as salaries and administration; the Research Infrastructure program supports the modernization, development or acquisition of new research infrastructure, such as equipment, lab specimens and computer software.

So far, the ORF has provided funding towards 588 infrastructure projects at 25 institutions.

**McMaster Innovation Park**

The McMaster Innovation Park is a 37-acre site being developed into a multi-building research campus connecting science, industry and government. The main focus of the park will be on the materials and advanced manufacturing sectors, as well as biosciences, nanotechnology and information and communications technologies. The project is expected to create 1,500 long-term, stable jobs.

**Ontario Institute for Cancer Research**

We are bringing together researchers from across the province who are working to prevent, manage and eliminate cancer. We established the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, the first of its kind in Canada.

**Tourism**

**Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)**

In an effort to protect trade and tourism jobs, Ontario has taken a lead position on the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI). While the current law requires a new card or passport at border crossings, Ontario has submitted several policy papers to the US Federal Government supporting an enhanced driver’s licence as an alternative border-crossing document.

Working with Homeland Security we have already made progress: children under 16 and youths 16-18 traveling in groups have been exempted from needing a passport.

Ontario is playing the role of positive catalyst for changes in passport requirements that will protect tourism and trade.

**Festival and Events Support**

New funding under our government’s Fall Economic Stimulus package was offered to organizers of festivals and events across the province. We received so many excellent applications that we increased the investment and funded expansions of 57 festivals and events to be held in summer and fall, 2007.

**Domestic Tourism and Cultural Tourism Marketing Campaigns**

Cultural tourism contributes more than $4.5 billion annually to the provincial economy. Our advertising campaign helped increase awareness of Ontario as a cultural tourism destination, generating more than 50,000 hits
on a dedicated website showcasing diverse cultural experiences, attractions and products.

Ontarians constitute three quarters of the province’s tourists. We launched a new marketing campaign to encourage Ontarians to travel in their own province. Since the launch of our popular cultural tourism advertisements, the number of visitors to www.ontariotravel.net has increased by 26 per cent.

**Convention Development**

Conventions bring large numbers of high-spending visitors to Ontario. In the 2007 budget, we committed to help build a convention centre in Niagara Falls and expand the Ottawa Congress Centre.

**Fun Pass**

The Fun Pass allows free admission to many of the Ontario government’s attractions for kids accompanied by a paying adult. It was first piloted in 2005, and went province-wide in 2006.

**Ontario Tourism Strategy**

In 2004, we developed the Ontario Tourism Strategy in response to the long-term challenges affecting the industry.

This is a joint industry-government plan setting out five strategic directions that are building a stronger, more vibrant tourism industry in Canada.

We are seeing results that will boost the Ontario economy:

- In Niagara, the committee identified the need for convention facilities and in the last budget (2007) we announced funding over two years for the planning and construction of a conference and convention facility
- The tourism industry told us it needed help building compelling projects and we responded with an investment to help 57 festivals enhance program marketing
- We also created a quarterly e-newsletter to attract foreign investment. This e-newsletter will provide over 2,500 key tourism stakeholders with information on tourism related investment activities in Ontario.

**Investment in Tourism Agencies and Attractions**

We increased capital funding for provincially-owned tourism agencies and attractions by 152 per cent.

Look for improvements at Thunder Bay’s Fort William Historical Park, Midland’s Huronia Historical Parks, St. Lawrence Parks Commission and Toronto’s Ontario Place.

The world’s largest lantern festival outside of Asia came to Ontario Place for the first time in 2006 thanks to our investment. More than 200,000 people attended the event, 51 per cent more than predicted. Gate receipts exceeded $3 million.

**Culinary Tourism Strategy**

Culinary tourism is one of the fastest growing niche tourism sectors. Tourists are increasingly interested in local foods, wines and beer. In 2006, we launched the Culinary Tourism Strategy. We have a culinary tourism coordinator on staff at the Ministry of Tourism who is working with groups in Ottawa, Essex, Toronto, Prince Edward County, Niagara and Muskoka to develop and promote culinary tourism destinations.

**Ontario Wine Industry**

We partnered with our wineries and breweries to develop ways to enhance the tourism experience of our visitors. New regulations under the Liquor Licence Act allow wineries and breweries to sell individual servings of their products to visitors at their production sites.

We continue to support Ontario’s internationally recognized and respected wine industry.
The Health Care We Need

The Ontario Liberal Plan for Better Health
We believe in a universal, publicly funded health care system that gives us the compassionate care we need, when we need it. Medicare gives expression to what it means to be Canadian. It doesn’t matter where you’re from, who you know, or how much money you have. If you’re sick, if you need help, you won’t be turned away.

Under the Conservatives, Ontario lost public hospitals and hospital beds. Many Ontarians had to do without a family doctor. The Conservatives fired thousands of nurses and refused to measure wait times for important procedures — they were afraid of what they’d find out.

We came close to losing public medicare, piece by piece, as the Conservatives under-funded the system and brought us closer to privatization.

We were elected in 2003 with a strong mandate to fix public health care. We raised the Health Premium and put every cent back into Health Care. It was the toughest decision of our mandate, but together we’re getting results for all Ontarians. We focused on getting the best care, in the least amount of time. We’re attracting the most talented health care professionals to Ontario while creating opportunities for students entering the field. We will continue to strengthen and modernize health care; not privatize it.

We’re working together to build a health care system that’s second to none. We’ve got to get this right, because when a loved one needs help, nothing else matters. Patients are so much more than case numbers and medical conditions. They are our mothers and fathers, our brothers and sisters, our sons and daughters and our best friends.

We’ve come a long way together, but there’s still more to do.

**CHANGE THAT’S WORKING**

**Commitment To Medicare**

We promised to put your health care first. We promised to invest in medicare to make Ontario a health care leader once again.

We’re making record investments in health care. In our most recent budget we announced an increase in health spending to almost $38 billion — a 29 per cent increase since 2003.

We’re improving medicare in Ontario with the Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act. The Act:

- Opposes two-tier medicine by closing loopholes that allow queue-jumping and extra billing
- Ensures Ontarians get the health care they need, through accountability agreements between the ministry and health care providers
- Established an independent Ontario Health Quality Council to report on our health care system, so we can determine where improvements are needed and where progress is being made.

We’re overseeing the delivery of stronger locally planned health care through 14 Local Health Integration Networks.

Our Wait Times Strategy has provided Ontarians with an additional 1,270,000 procedures — including MRI and CT scans; cancer, cardiac and cataract surgeries; and hip and knee replacements.

We’re improving access to primary care for more than 2.5 million Ontarians through 150 Family Health Teams.

We are increasing access to colorectal cancer screening for Ontarians aged 50 years or older over the next five years.
We made Ontario a world leader in end-of-life care, with our investment to improve end-of-life care services at home and in over 30 residential hospices.

We’re attracting health care providers to Ontario and we made Ontario one of the few jurisdictions in the world to guarantee a full-time job offer to every graduate of our nursing schools.

We are protecting our children with three new vaccines, free of charge, saving families $600 per child; 1.8 million children are now protected from chicken pox, meningococcal meningitis and pneumococcal disease.

And we’re screening newborns for 27 rare genetic conditions — 28 by the end of 2007.

We promised to recruit and train more health care professionals so no one goes without the medical attention they need and deserve.

We’re increasing medical school spaces by 23 per cent.

We’re creating 8,000 nursing jobs and have a job guarantee for new nursing graduates.

We doubled the number of nurse practitioner education spaces from 75 to 150, with a further increase beginning this year.

We exceeded our own targets when we more than doubled the number of training and assessment positions for foreign-trained doctors, from 90 to 200 per year. There are now 750 practising foreign-trained doctors and 500 more enrolled in ministry-funded training and assessment programs.

Seven million people — more than half the province — enrolled in some form of group practice model, thanks in part to the creation of 150 Family Health Teams.

We established HealthForceOntario — our human resources strategy for health care — to further increase the number of nurses, doctors and other health care professionals serving Ontario. It includes a new Recruitment Centre and Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals.

And we launched an ambitious recruitment strategy to repatriate Ontario doctors working in other provinces and abroad.

We promised to help you stay healthy at every age and stage in your life — in school, at work, in your community and during retirement.

We have increased the number of rare genetic diseases newborns are screened for — from two to 27 — including disorders such as sickle cell disease. In 2007, we’ll bring the total to 28 when we add cystic fibrosis to the list of disorders screened.

We’re funding three new vaccinations for children: chicken pox, meningococcal meningitis and pneumococcal disease, saving Ontario families about $600 per child.

And we are increasing access to colorectal cancer screening for Ontarians aged 50 years or older over the next five years.

Most recently, we introduced a vaccination program for the Human Papilloma Virus, a cause of cervical cancer, for young women in grade 6.

We created an action plan to promote healthy eating and active living, including:

- A pilot project to provide fruits and vegetables, especially Ontario-grown produce, to children in schools in Northern Ontario
- A Healthy School Recognition Program to recognize schools that promote healthy eating and physical activity, encouraging them to keep up the good work and serve as a role models
- Eat Right Ontario, a web and phone-based dietitian advisory service to provide families and health care providers with timely and reliable nutrition information
We’re encouraging Ontarians to be more physically active by investing in community groups and organizations that promote active living. Over the last two years, Communities in Action Fund grants have been awarded to approximately 700 organizations.

We’re working with our schools to include 20 minutes of daily physical activity during the regular school day and to remove junk food from vending machines. We established nutritional guidelines for all elementary schools in conjunction with the Dieticians of Canada.

And we’ve made enclosed public spaces and workplaces 100 per cent smoke free throughout Ontario. The Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy is one of the strongest tobacco control strategies in North America. Over the counter nicotine replacement therapy products including nicotine patches, gum, lozenges, inhalers, sprays and tablets are now exempt from PST. So far, the number of Ontarians who smoke has gone down almost 20 per cent.

We promised to pass a Commitment to Medicare Act that will make universal, public medicare the law in Ontario.

We passed the Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act.

We promised to report directly to you on health care because you have a right to know how your health care system is doing.

We launched the Ontario Health Quality Council. This new council delivers an annual performance report on the public health system in Ontario so we can determine where improvements are needed and where progress is being made.

We set wait time targets for five key health services: cataract and cancer surgery, hip and knee replacements, selected cardiac procedures, and MRI and CT scans. Physicians and administrators use Ontario’s new Wait Time Information System and patients can track wait times online. So far, the wait time website has had over 4 million hits. Reducing wait times means Ontarians can get the care they need closer to home.

We’re consulting with Ontarians directly on the social impact of drug policies and priorities. This is part of our plan to deliver better value for money within the provincial drug system. The savings will be reinvested into the provincial drug system so patients get improved access to drugs.

We promised to make sure your health care dollars are invested wisely.

We now require balanced hospital budgets, putting an end to the cycle of poor planning and last-minute bailouts.

We’re tracking our progress and targeting funding to areas where we need it most using e-health initiatives like the Wait Time Information System.

We’re consulting with Ontarians directly on the social impact of drug policies and priorities. This is part of our plan to deliver better value for money within the provincial drug system. The savings will be reinvested into the provincial drug system so patients get improved access to drugs.

And, for the first time in Ontario’s history, we introduced bulk purchasing of hospital equipment to save millions of taxpayer dollars.

We promised to give the provincial auditor the authority to audit all health care agencies and deliverers.

We broadened the powers of the Auditor General to review public sector organizations including health care agencies.

Better Care

We promised to expand MRI and CT services in the public system to provide better access for everyone.

We took MRI and CT machines out of the private sector and made them public. We also increased their hours of operation so even more Ontarians can get access to service.
We also opened or expanded 12 MRI/CT sites across the province — Windsor, Owen Sound, Oakville, Niagara Falls, Markham, Richmond Hill, Orillia, Guelph, Brantford, Belleville and two in Ottawa. An additional site in Cobourg will be ready by the end of 2007.

We replaced seven MRI and 31 CT scanners in public hospitals with new, more efficient machines that perform more scans in the same amount of time. In all, we have increased the number of CT scans performed each year by 15 per cent, and have more than doubled the number of MRI exams performed in Ontario. That means more Ontarians are being diagnosed sooner and starting on the road to recovery faster.

We promised to deliver better family health care through family health teams … we promised to establish at least 150 family health teams across Ontario.

There are 150 Family Health Teams located across the province in both urban and rural areas. They have improved access to primary care for more than 2.5 million Ontarians in 112 communities. The teams include physicians and other providers such as nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers and dieticians, all working together to see more patients and to keep them healthy.

We promised to strengthen our health science centres with stable, multi-year funding that meets their unique needs.

For the second year in a row, hospitals know what funding they will receive for the next three years: the first time multi-year funding announcements have been made for individual hospitals in Ontario.

We promised to invest in homecare so Ontarians can receive better care at home.

We increased our investment in home care so approximately 88,000 more Ontarians are receiving care at home. Services include end-of-life care, in-home rehabilitation for people who have had hip and knee replacements, and community services. Funding has increased by more than 38 per cent since 2003-2004.

We promised to help families struggling with mental illness.

We’re stabilizing and expanding services for people with mental illness and we hired 481 new mental health workers. We are also providing:

- Community-based services, including crisis response, early intervention in psychosis and Assertive Community Treatment Teams
- Services to help keep people with mental illness out of the criminal justice and correctional systems, including crisis response and outreach, short-term residential crisis response beds and court support services
- Support for 90 new forensic hospital beds for assessing, treating and rehabilitating mentally ill people in the criminal court system
- 1,750 supportive housing units for people with mental illness
- Treatment programs for children, youth and adults with eating disorders.

These new investments mean 227,100 more Ontarians are getting the services they need in their communities.
Health Care Professionals

We promised to ensure there are more family doctors in communities across Ontario … We promised to increase medical school spots by 15 per cent and increase the number of family medicine training spots.

We’re increasing family medicine residency positions by 70 per cent, which will mean more family doctors in Ontario by 2008. This investment includes capital funding for family medicine teaching sites associated with medical schools at McMaster University, the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto, the University of Western Ontario and Queen’s University.

And we’re supporting the increased costs of training more family medicine residents through operating funding over four years.

We are attracting more health care professionals to the province and we made more room in medical schools. We’re increasing medical school spaces by 23 per cent. We’re opening satellite medical school campuses in Mississauga, St. Catharines, Kitchener-Waterloo and Windsor.

We also opened the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. The two campuses — one in Sudbury, one in Thunder Bay — have a mandate to focus on medical education that addresses the unique needs and characteristics of rural and northern Ontario. This will mean more doctors practicing in rural and northern communities.

We promised to remove barriers preventing well-qualified foreign-trained physicians from practicing in Ontario.

We’re increasing the number of international medical graduates (IMGs) working in the province. This investment has:

- Established the Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals, which provides information on how to achieve licence requirements to work in health care in Ontario
- Established IMG-Ontario where eligible foreign-trained physicians are screened and then directed to an assessment or training position, leading to them being registered to practise in the province
- More than doubled the number of IMG training and assessment positions to 200 annually
- Funded a program that registers experienced physicians who are currently practising outside the province
- Created a pilot program to help IMGs who are not working as physicians to use their transferable skills and explore alternative employment opportunities in other areas of the health sector.

We are breaking down barriers: since 2003, approximately 750 foreign-trained doctors received certificates to practice in Ontario and there are currently 500 foreign-trained doctors enrolled in ministry-funded training and assessment programs. We surpassed our own targets when we offered a record 218 positions to foreign-trained doctors in 2006. For the past three years, most of the licenses issued in Ontario were to foreign-trained doctors.

We promised to help under-serviced communities attract and retain doctors and other health care professionals.

We’re helping under-serviced communities by offering premiums to encourage physicians to practice in these communities. We also introduced new funding to support hospital-based specialists in the North.

We’re supporting nursing students interested in practising in rural, remote or underserviced communities by helping with their tuition costs. We more than doubled the number of training and assessment positions for foreign-trained doctors to 200 annually. Every IMG position participant must practise in underserviced areas for five years in return for their assessment or training.

We are delivering 150 Family Health Teams, half of which are located in underserviced communities. Each team includes doctors, nurses, nurse
practitioners and other health care professionals, including dieticians, all working together to see more patients and keep them healthy.

Through our Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner program, we are supporting registered nurses training to become nurse practitioners and fill vacant positions, many of which are located in rural and remote communities.

We promised to help you care for your parents and other seriously ill family members … with a new Family Medical Leave Act to provide up to six weeks of job-protected unpaid leave to help you care for a member of your family.

Employees can take up to eight weeks of job-protected unpaid leave to provide care or support to a family member with a serious medical condition. We know that when someone you care for is sick, or needs help, nothing else matters.

We then expanded Job-Protected Family Medical Leave to include additional relatives and close friends.

We promised to plan ahead to make sure shortsighted decisions do not leave us short of health care professionals.

We created HealthForceOntario, the province’s first human resources strategy in health care. It’s an innovative multi-year plan to give Ontario the right number and mix of health care providers, working in communities across the province to meet our health needs — now and in the future.

We also appointed the first ever Assistant Deputy Minister of Health Human Resources, Dr. Joshua Tepper.

Helping People Stay Healthy

We promised to help expectant mothers with nutrition and pre-natal care through better family health care.

We are supporting Ontario’s 36 public health units to help plan for healthy pregnancies.

And we improved care for thousands of women and newborns by supporting the services of 100 more midwives.

We promised to help kids stay healthy through mandatory daily physical activity in schools … by ensuring they receive a minimum of 20 minutes of cardiovascular activity every day. We promised to set a strong example on nutrition by banning the sale of junk food in our elementary schools.

We’re giving kids 20 minutes of physical activity during the regular school day.

We introduced the Active8 Program so participating schools can introduce regular physical activity as part of the school day.

We’re also encouraging teachers, administrators and students to find new ways to make physical activity a priority at their school. More than 1,300 schools accepted the Healthy Schools Challenge to undertake activities to make their schools healthier this school year.

We removed junk food from school vending machines and established nutritional guidelines for elementary schools in conjunction with the Dieticians of Canada.

And we partnered with the Federal Government to sign a four-year agreement on sport participation.
We promised to provide public schools with guidelines on how to treat a child in anaphylactic shock.

Every school board must have an anaphylactic policy in place so teachers and students will know what to do when someone goes into anaphylactic shock, thanks to Sabrina’s Law.

We promised to support community sport and recreation.

We’re increasing participation in sport and physical activity through Active2010, which includes:

- Investing in community groups and organizations that promote active living. Over the last two years, Communities in Action Fund grants have been awarded to approximately 700 organizations
- A long-term strategy for planning, managing and promoting trail use in Ontario – the Ontario Trails Strategy

We increased funding to our 64 Provincial Sport Organizations. Our total support for amateur athletes has increased by 175 per cent since 2003.

We introduced the Quest for Gold Lottery. So far, $22.9 million has been provided to help athletes and coaches reach their potential as they compete provincially, nationally and internationally.

Through the Community Use of Schools program, we’re helping schools eliminate the fees youth and community groups pay to use Ontario’s schools after hours.

We partnered with the Federal Government to sign a four-year agreement on sport participation.

And we have successfully attracted a number of international championships through the International Sport Hosting strategy:

- 2007 FIFA Under-20 World Cup of Soccer

We promised to address the number one killer in Ontario with an aggressive plan to reduce smoking … We will make cigarettes more expensive to prevent kids from lighting up … We promised to ban countertop and behind-the-counter retail displays of tobacco products … We promised to make all public and work places in Ontario 100 per cent smoke free within three years. Health is a provincial responsibility, so we promised to take the onus off municipal governments.

We are delivering programs to help Ontarians quit smoking, prevent people (especially youth) from starting to smoke, and protect Ontarians from involuntary exposure to second-hand smoke.

We made enclosed public spaces and workplaces 100 per cent smoke free throughout Ontario and we raised taxes on cigarettes by $7.50 per carton — approaching the national average. So far, the number of Ontarians who smoke has gone down almost 20 per cent.

At the same time, we removed the PST on over the counter nicotine replacement therapy products.

We promised to make sure you have access to vaccines and screenings that work.

We have increased the number of rare genetic diseases newborns are screened for — from two to 27 — including disorders such as sickle cell disease. In 2007, we’ll bring the total to 28 when we add cystic fibrosis to the list of disorders screened.

We’re funding three new vaccinations for children: chicken pox, meningococcal meningitis and pneumococcal disease, saving Ontario families about $600 per child.
And we are increasing access to colorectal cancer screening for Ontarians aged 50 years or older over the next five years.

Most recently, we introduced a vaccination program for the Human Papilloma Virus, a cause of cervical cancer, for young women in grade 8.

We promised to give the Chief Medical Officer of Health real independence to protect you.

We passed a law that makes the Chief Medical Officer of Health independent.

We promised to ensure cleaner air and safer water for Ontarians.

We set aggressive yet realistic targets to reduce emissions that cause climate change. We will reach the Kyoto targets by 2014, achieve 15 per cent reduction in emissions by 2020 and an 80 per cent reduction by 2050.

Our gasoline is cleaner. We mandated that gasoline sold in Ontario must contain five per cent cleaner burning ethanol — equivalent to taking 800,000 cars off the road — while creating jobs in Ontario’s new renewable fuels industry. We plan to bring ethanol content up to 10 per cent.

We remain committed to phasing out all of Ontario’s dirty coal plants. We closed the Lakeview Coal plant, the largest single source of air pollution in the Greater Toronto Area. We reduced coal-fired generation by 32 per cent. By 2014 we will eliminate it completely.

We’re improving public transit systems to encourage commuters to leave their cars at home.

We also announced the Move Ontario 2020 plan that will provide funding of over $17.5 billion for public transit capital projects. Once complete, this project could reduce annual car trips by 300 million.

We’re working with communities and municipalities to protect our drinking water through the Clean Water Act. We’re also protecting our lakes and rivers from massive diversions or water, and imposing a charge for the first time, for commercial users.

We implemented all of the Walkerton Inquiry recommendations.

To crack down on polluters, we passed the You Spill, You Pay bill that fines industrial polluters up to $100,000 per day.

Ontario was one of the last places in North America where companies could dump untreated toxic waste into our soil. We banned that practice.

And we capped the emissions of large polluters, while updating the air standard for over 40 pollutants — the largest change in over 25 years.

We promised to grow Ontario’s economy and create opportunities for better health for all.

Since October 2003, the Ontario economy has created more than 340,000 net new jobs. Over this same period, the unemployment rate has fallen from seven per cent to 6.6 per cent as of July 2007. Of these net new jobs, more than 80 per cent are full-time.
CHANGE IN PROGRESS

We promised to work with experts to set and meet maximum needs-based waiting times for care ... we will begin by setting and meeting standards for cardiac care, cancer care, total joint replacements and MRI/CT scans.

We're not only measuring wait times, we're bringing them down. And for the first time this information is public. Working with experts, we established wait time access targets in five key areas — cancer surgery, cardiac bypass surgery, cataract surgery, hip and knee replacements and MRI and CT scans.

We worked with other provinces and territories to establish benchmarks for 10 key medical services. Physicians and administrators use Ontario’s new Wait Time Information System and patients can track wait times online. We are meeting our targets in cardiac care, cancer and cataract care and are working towards meeting our targets in joint replacements and MRI and CT scans. By reducing wait times, Ontarians can get the care they need closer to home.

We promised to take pressure off our hospitals to reduce wait times in overcrowded emergency rooms.

Our three-point Emergency Department Action Plan includes:

- Reducing emergency room waiting time by adding physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners; improving working conditions for frontline health care workers; and enhancing critical care capacity in hospitals
- Supporting current community-based services and providing more services in the community
- Constructing 1,750 new long-term beds and replacing 662 long-term care beds

We promised to hire 8,000 more nurses and create a better working environment for these hardworking professionals ... our goal is to have 70 per cent of registered nurses working full-time, up from only 50 per cent in 2003.

We’re creating 8,000 new nursing jobs in Ontario. More than 5,400 were created in the last three years, with 1,600 more projected for 2007. We’ve funded another 1,200 in our long-term care homes.

We issued a job guarantee for all nursing students in Ontario which is expected to deliver up to 4,000 more nurses. We’ve increased nursing positions by more than 10 per cent.

We’re supporting nursing students interested in practising in rural, remote or underserviced communities by helping them with their tuition costs.

We’re enhancing our nursing roles so that registered practical nurses can now initiate certain procedures without waiting for a doctor.

We doubled nurse practitioner education spaces to 150 with a further increase beginning in 2007.

To improve the working environment for nurses, we delivered one-time funding to hospitals for better supplies and equipment, and more educational and professional career opportunities. We also supported the purchase of equipment — such as patient lifts, electric beds and safety alarms — to improve patient safety and working conditions.

We are helping hospitals retain the services of experienced nurses by providing opportunities to expand nurses’ knowledge and training so they can work in other clinical areas or nursing roles.

We are working to keep late career nurses in the profession, utilizing their skills and experience. More than 1,800 late career nurses are participating.

We’re assisting hospitals in transition to purchase safe medical equipment through a one-time investment.

We became the first province to support clinical simulation equipment for nurses-in-training.
We’re helping create mentoring relationships between experienced nurses and newly hired or less experienced nurses. We’re also providing critical care training to newly hired nurses in hospitals.

And we are supporting registered nurses training to become nurse practitioners and fill vacant positions, many of which are located in rural and remote communities through our Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner program.

**We promised to help Ontarians become the healthiest people in Canada.**

We created the Ministry of Health Promotion to develop new strategies to combat the growing problems of inactivity, poor nutrition and unhealthy life choices in Ontario.

We invested in community and recreation infrastructure projects across the province.

We’re increasing participation in sport and physical activity through Active2010, which includes:

- Investing in community groups and organizations that promote active living. Over the last two years, Communities in Action Fund grants have been awarded to approximately 700 organizations.
- A long-term strategy for planning, managing and promoting trail use in Ontario – the Ontario Trails Strategy.

We are working with our schools to include 20 minutes of daily physical activity during the regular school day and to remove junk food from vending machines. We established nutritional guidelines for elementary schools in conjunction with the Dieticians of Canada.

We’re helping schools eliminate the fees youth and community groups pay to use Ontario’s schools after hours through the Community Use of Schools program.

We’ve made enclosed public spaces and workplaces 100 per cent smoke free throughout Ontario. The Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy is one of the strongest tobacco control strategies in North America. Over the counter nicotine replacement therapy products, including nicotine patches, gum, lozenges, inhalers, sprays and tablets, are now exempt from PST. So far, the number of Ontarians who smoke has decreased by almost 20 per cent.

We developed an injury prevention strategy that focuses on injury prevention in places where we work, live and play.

We launched the Action Plan for Healthy Eating and Healthy Living, which includes:

- A pilot project to provide fruits and vegetables, especially Ontario-grown produce, to children in Northern Ontario schools.
- A Healthy School Recognition Program to recognize schools that promote healthy eating and physical activity, encouraging them to keep up the good work and serve as a role models.
- A web and phone-based dietitian advisory service to provide families and health care providers with timely and reliable nutrition information.

We hosted the Healthy Eating and Active Living Conference, which brought together provincial, national and international experts to share their wealth of knowledge, practical experiences and best practices related to nutrition and physical activity.

We’re encouraging Ontarians to be more physically active by investing in community groups and organizations that promote active living. Over the last two years, Communities in Action Fund grants have been awarded to approximately 700 organizations.

And we signed a four-year bi-lateral agreement on sport participation with the Federal Government in March 2005.
We promised to partner with businesses to create and expand healthy workplace practices.

To help increase health and safety awareness of youth entering the workforce, we created an Action Group on Vulnerable Workers Under 25 made up of young people, labour market experts, employers and chaired by the Minister of Labour.

We created a Health Care Advisory Committee with employer and labour representatives to provide advice on how best to protect health care workers.

And we created 100 per cent smoke-free workplaces for the first time in the province’s history, protecting workers from unwanted exposure to second-hand smoke.

We promised our Seniors Strategy will focus on keeping seniors active and well.

We’re helping seniors live independently in their communities longer. That’s why we increased funding to seniors’ centres for social and recreation services and education on issues such as Alzheimer’s disease.

We are also running the Falls Prevention Seminar series to help seniors live safe, active and independent lives.

We promised to enhance protection for Ontarians who use non-traditional medicine.

We’re regulating traditional Chinese Medicine through the Traditional Chinese Medicine Act.

And through the Health System Improvements Act we established new colleges to regulate four more health professions - naturopathy, homeopathy, kinesiology and psychotherapy.

We promised to provide better access to life-saving portable heart defibrillators.

We exceeded the government’s commitment to provide better access to life-saving portable defibrillators. We installed 297 units in 117 buildings across the province, with 46 more ordered for installation.

We also partnered with the Heart and Stroke Foundation to create the Thousand Defibrillators Program that puts defibrillators in community and recreation centres.

The largest government investment in defibrillators in Canada’s history has already proven successful. Two lives have been saved.

We promised to build a Seniors Strategy that guarantees our seniors are treated with respect and dignity.

We made mandatory retirement illegal — because Ontarians should have the right to choose when they want to retire.

With the number of seniors expected to double over the next 25 years, now is the time to strengthen long-term care. We increased annual funding for long-term care homes by almost $800 million.

We delivered new legislation to improve care in long-term care homes. The Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007, includes:

- A requirement that long-term care homes meet new staffing and care standards that will be set in regulation to provide the best possible care to residents
- Whistle-blowing protection for staff, residents and volunteers who report abuse or neglect
- An enhanced and more enforceable Residents’ Bill of Rights
- The requirement that a registered nurse be on-site and on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week
✓ Restricting the use of restraints to limited circumstances where it is absolutely necessary and only with appropriate safeguards

✓ Defined licence terms for long-term care homes of up to 25 years; licences can be revoked in cases of non-compliance.

We funded new staff including 1,200 more nurses and we introduced surprise annual home inspections for long-term care homes.

We delivered a five-year strategy to combat elder abuse and extended the strategy for an additional two years. We provided grants to 61 community organizations working to prevent elder abuse and are continuing this investment in the current fiscal year.

We are implementing Ontario’s Strategy for Alzheimer Disease and Related Dementias.

We are listening to the views of Ontarians through a new Citizen’s Council on the social impact of drug policies and priorities.

And about 745,000 senior families have benefited from improvements to the Ontario Property and Sales Credit for seniors since 2003.

OVER AND ABOVE

Wait Times

For the first time in Ontario, we’re measuring and monitoring wait times for children’s surgeries. With the addition of paediatric surgeries to our successful Wait Time Strategy, we’re funding an additional 2,000 surgeries to help ensure faster health care for our children.

We partnered with the federal government to lay the groundwork for Ontario’s first ever Wait Time Guarantee for cataract surgery, beginning January 2009.

As a result of new investments in our cancer centres, we reduced wait times for cancer radiation treatment by 31 per cent.

Nurses

We became the first province to support clinical simulation equipment for nurses-in-training.

We launched new health provider roles to create new opportunities for nurses. HealthForceOntario, our health human resources strategy, has introduced new nursing opportunities including Nurse Endoscopists, Surgical First Assists and Nurse Practitioners for Anesthesia.

And we doubled the number of education spaces for training nurse practitioners from 75 to 150.

Midwives

We expanded access to midwives by supporting the services of 100 more midwives. Ontario is the leading province for midwifery, home to over half of Canada’s midwives.

Renewing Ontario’s Hospital Infrastructure

Construction is moving forward or complete at more than 100 hospital sites across the province.

Local Cost Share Policy for Hospital Projects

We introduced a new cost sharing policy to make hospital projects more affordable for Ontario communities. We increased the province’s share of construction costs to 90 per cent, to further support rebuilding our hospitals.
Expanded Cancer Centres

We’re redeveloping and expanding more cancer centres in Ontario than ever before.

We supported the redevelopment and opening of three cancer centres:

- Redeveloped the Juravinski Cancer Centre in Hamilton
- Opened the Carlo Fidani Cancer Centre in Peel
- Opened the RS McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre

We approved major expansions of two cancer centres:

- The Ottawa Hospital Regional Cancer Centre (Queensway Carleton Hospital and The Ottawa Hospital’s Civic sites)
- Cancer Centre for Southeastern Ontario (Kingston General Hospital)

And we approved construction of four new regional cancer centres:

- Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket
- Sault Area Hospital
- Niagara Health System
- Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie

While cancer centres are under construction in Ottawa and Barrie, we’ll provide radiation services in those cities using new mobile cancer radiation units, allowing us to treat 400 patients annually starting in fall 2007.

Healthier Ontarians

Diabetes Care

We became the first province to fully fund insulin pumps for children with diabetes under a new program that is benefiting approximately 1,000 children in Ontario.

We’re helping patients with diabetes manage their disease more effectively.

We created 146 Diabetes Education Teams across the province, in Family Health Teams, Community Health Centres and hospitals. Teams are made up of Registered Nurses and Dieticians.

We introduced new coverage for drugs to help manage diabetes, including Actos.

And we increased optometry coverage for Ontarians with medical conditions such as diabetes who require regular eye exams, from once every two years to once every year.

Stroke Care

We designated a new district stroke centre at the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital and five new stroke prevention clinics.

Breast Cancer Screening

We expanded the provincial breast cancer screening program by adding 100,000 more scans per year and 34 new breast cancer screening sites.

Better Access to Medications

We’re giving patients better access to the medications they need. The Transparent Drug System for Patients Act allows Ontario to leverage its $3
billion drug program to get better value for money. New processes in place allow Ontario to speed up the review process for breakthrough medications. Since October 2006, 31 new brand-name drugs have been listed for coverage.

We more than doubled funding for cancer-fighting drugs under the New Drug Funding Program, and provided coverage for new drugs, including Herceptin and Velcade.

And we launched a brand new service called MedsCheck — the first of its kind in Canada — for all Ontarians who take three or more medications. MedsCheck is a free service providing people the opportunity to consult their pharmacist for up to 30 minutes once a year to review the medications they are taking.

Community-based Health Care

Community Health Centres

We launched the largest expansion of Community Health Centres (CHCs) in Ontario’s history, to almost double the number of CHCs in the province — 49 new CHCs and satellites are established or under development, bringing the total number of centres to 103.

Long-term Care Homes

Better Nutrition for Long-Term Care Home Residents

We’re making sure long-term care home residents are provided with high quality, diverse menu choices by increasing the daily food allowance beginning September 1, 2007. It means long-term care homes will be better able to accommodate specialized diets and provide more wholesome options to their residents.

We also require that long-term care home resident meal plans be approved by a dietician.

Opened New Long-Term Care Beds

We opened 7,712 new long-term care beds across Ontario. We’re also upgrading Ontario’s 35,000 older long-term care beds over the next 10 years to give residents a higher quality of life in a more comfortable environment.

Increased Personal Comfort

We increased the comfort allowance for the first time in 20 years, to put more discretionary income in the hands of residents of long-term care (LTC) homes. We changed placement regulations to allow couples to be placed in the same LTC home and we funded 12,600 new bedlifts.

Better Training For Staff

We hired eight new regional-coordinators to implement Best Practice Guidelines, such as treating diabetes and preventing falls, for nurses in long-term care homes. We’re training 4,900 front-line staff in how to better care for residents with dementia and related conditions. And we launched the Seniors’ Health Research Transfer Network to improve the quality of life for seniors in LTC homes and in the community, by making the latest research more accessible to caregivers.

Community Support Services

Community Support Services

We invested in services for seniors and persons with disabilities to allow them to stay independent in their own homes longer. Services include meals
on wheels, transportation services, caregiver respite and 24-hour assisted living in supportive housing.

**End-of-Life Care**

We made Ontario a world leader in end-of-life care, to give those Ontarians with life-threatening illnesses the option of receiving care in their own homes, or in the home-like environment of a residential hospice. New funding has expanded in-home end-of-life care services to 3,500 more Ontarians. We’re providing nursing and personal support services to more than 30 residential hospices across the province.

**Physiotherapy**

We expanded access to physiotherapy services for seniors, including seniors in our long-term care homes. We’re now providing physiotherapy to approximately 14,000 more seniors than in 2003.

**Local Health Integration Networks**

We gave Ontario communities a voice in local health care decision-making by creating 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs). LHINs surveyed their communities and local health care providers on how to improve access to local health care services — they engaged 40,000 Ontarians in the process. Local communities now have a say in how half of Ontario’s health-care budget is spent.

**Land Ambulance**

We listened to our municipal partners and initiated an upload of the costs of emergency land ambulance services, and will achieve a true 50:50 share by 2008.

**Organ Donation**

We launched an organ donation strategy that includes a new living donor database for Ontario, compensation for living donors and the sharing of organ donation information with hospitals. We reversed a trend prior to 2003 where the number of organ transplants was decreasing — the number of organ transplants in Ontario increased by 40 per cent between 2003 and 2007.

**HIV Testing**

We launched a groundbreaking HIV testing program — the first of its kind in Canada — to offer free, on-site testing to determine, in 60 seconds, whether an individual has HIV. We’re also adding 24 new anonymous testing sites, with an emphasis on northern and rural communities.
Government that Works for You

The Ontario Liberal Plan
for a More Democratic Ontario
There is a generation of young people losing interest in our democratic institutions. Election after election, voter turnout reminds us that Canadians aren’t as engaged as they once were.

Under the Conservatives, the deterioration of our democratic institutions continued at a high pace. Public consultation was most often skirted, even for major legislation. MPPs and Cabinet Ministers lost their credibility for continually abusing taxpayer dollars. They were seen as nothing more than the Premier’s puppets, manipulated by that office and unelected advisors.

Government advertising no longer conveyed information to the public. Instead it was used mainly to make the government look good. Elections were timed to reduce turnout and minimize exposure of the government’s record.

When we were elected in 2003, we immediately set about putting in place an effective plan to rebuild and reform democracy in Ontario. And it didn’t cost a cent. We focused on making the political process more inclusive, more democratic and respectful of hard-earned tax dollars. We have made government more effective, responsive and accountable.

Together we’ve come a long way, but there’s more to do.

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**CHANGE THAT’S WORKING**

**Strengthening Our Democracy**

We promised to introduce fixed dates for elections.

We passed the Elections Statute Law Amendment Act, which sets scheduled election dates every four years.

We promised to target an increase in voter turnout of at least 10 per cent.

To make it easier to vote, we are:

- Extending polling hours by one hour every day the polls are open
- Adding seven more advance polling days
- Updating the Permanent Register of Electors with targeted enumerations
- Giving the Chief Electoral Officer more communications authority
- Requiring that new-voter information packages be distributed to schools

We look forward to the results on October 10.

We now require the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) to undertake a survey after each election to assess voters’ experiences and barriers for non-voting electors and report the findings in the CEO’s annual report. We hope recommendations from these surveys will make voting in Ontario more inclusive and accessible.
We promised to give you new ways to make your voice heard … For example, we will look to Citizens’ Juries, made up of representative groups of Ontarians, to provide advice on a broad range of issues.

We consulted with Ontarians on major pieces of legislation, and when necessary, we allowed video conferencing for presenters.

We also used the Internet for pre-budget consultations to allow Ontarians to comment and give input into the budget process.

And we established Ontario’s first Citizens’ Assembly to study electoral reform.

We promised to give your elected representative more power. We promised to make sure all MPPs outside of Cabinet were free to criticize and vote against government legislation, with the exception of explicit campaign promises and confidence matters.

Governing party MPPs are now allowed to vote against government legislation, with the exception of campaign promises and confidence matters.

We promised to show up for Question Period. We promised to fine any Cabinet Minister who fails to attend two-thirds of Question Periods $500 for each additional question period missed.

We amended the Executive Council Act, which penalizes Cabinet Ministers who attend less than two-thirds of Question Periods over a government’s term. We have shown up for question period — not a single Cabinet Minister was fined.

Any revenues gained from the $500 penalty for each day missed will be put into public programs and services.

We promised to require public hearings for all major legislation.

We have had public hearings for all major legislation.

We promised to lift the veil of secrecy on government agencies and appointments.

We passed amendments to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to include universities, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation.

We also delivered transparency in the appointment process. Anyone interested must apply through a single website where all full-time positions are advertised, including Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Each appointment is considered by the Standing Committee on Government Agencies and then posted on the website with information on the position as well as a biography of the successful candidate.

We knew that being more open and transparent would result in more appointments for women and visible minorities. We’re pleased with the result: women now account for 45 per cent of all full-time appointments and we are actively working to increase cultural representation of Aboriginals, visible minorities and new Canadians on our province’s agencies, boards and commissions.

We promised to value our public servants and support them in their work.

We sought and received the input of our public servants through the OPS Ideas Campaign and OPS Innovation Fund on how government could work more effectively.

We instituted an Employee Recognition Policy and passed the Public Service of Ontario Statute Law Amendment Act. This Act includes whistleblower protections that have been called the strongest in Canada. It includes conflict of interest rules for government employees (both political and public service) and restores successor rights.

We redeveloped the GO JOBS website to enhance user accessibility and the OPS Spirit initiatives help bridge the gap between employees and volunteer organizations.
We began conducting annual employee surveys to engage our public service in building an innovative workforce that delivers high-quality public service.

We have strengthened our public services by investing in key areas such as meat inspectors, safe drinking water, air, waste and nutrient management workers and probation and parole officers.

**Reducing the Influence of Money in Politics**

**We promised to fully disclose donations in real time.**

Real-time public disclosure of donations to political parties and leadership candidates must be reported. Any contribution over $100 must be reported to Elections Ontario within 10 business days. The public can then access the information on Elections Ontario’s website within 10 business days after it is reported.

**Accountability For Your Tax Dollars**

**We promised to balance the budget.**

The Conservative government left behind a hidden $5.6 billion deficit.

We balanced the Budget in 2005-2006, and again in 2006-2007. We are on track to post five consecutive balanced budgets.

**We promised to table the provincial budget where it belongs — in the Legislature.**

Every one of our budgets has been tabled in the Legislature.

**We promised to ban self-promotional government advertising.**

The office of the Auditor General must review government advertising before it is released to the public, thanks to our Government Advertising Act, the first of its kind in North America.

Any advertisement found to promote partisan interests by the Auditor General will not proceed. Annual government advertising spending is down by an average of 33 per cent.

**We promised to make the budget more accountable by expanding the powers of the provincial auditor.**

The Auditor General can now conduct value-for-money audits of the broader public sector and all Crown-controlled corporations thanks to our Audit Statute Law Amendment Act.

And we passed a law to ensure that no government ever again can hide a deficit from the public.

**We promised to make the government’s business your business.**

Each year, we present an annual progress report outlining our strategic plan to deliver success for students, better health and a strong economy.

Last year we had the best record of compliance in the 17-year history of Freedom of Information legislation.

We have expanded the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to cover Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation and universities. And we’re providing unprecedented transparency to the province’s books before elections thanks to our Fiscal Transparency and Accountability Act.
CHANGE IN PROGRESS

We promised you would decide how elections work … after consulting with the public we promised to hold a referendum on whether we should keep our winner-take-all voting system or replace it.

We passed the Electoral System Referendum Act that required a referendum be held if the Citizens’ Assembly (CA) on Electoral Reform recommended an alternative system for Ontario.

At the same time, we contributed to the establishment of a parallel Students’ Assembly on Electoral Reform for Ontario High School Students.

On April 18, 2007, the CA voted in favour of recommending the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system. Every voter in Ontario will have a chance to vote on the adoption of the MMP system in a referendum held in conjunction with the next provincial election on October 10, 2007.

We promised to make online voting an option.

We have taken steps to make online voting a reality. The Election Statute Law Amendment Act gives the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) the authority to set up an electronic system to confirm information on the permanent register of electors. We also gave the CEO the authority to test new voting technologies in by-elections.

We promised you would have the right to set lower limits on money in politics.

We’re having a referendum in October 2007 to choose a new system to replace our current electoral system or to confirm the current system. Political financing of a system will be considered after Ontarians have chosen. Ontarians should have a chance to evaluate the current and alternative electoral systems before choosing binding rules. We will proceed after the referendum.

In the meantime, we have a new law that means real-time public disclosure of donations to political parties and leadership candidates must be reported.

OVER AND ABOVE

Pre-election Financial Report

We now require the Minister of Finance to release a pre-election report about Ontario’s finances to the Provincial Auditor for independent review before an election, so no government can hide a deficit as the Conservative party did in 2003.

In 2007, the Provincial Auditor released the first pre-election report — the first of its kind in Canada. Our expense and revenue estimates were confirmed.
True North

The Ontario Liberal Plan for Improving the Quality of Life in the North
Northern Ontario is home to some of the most breathtaking scenery anywhere in the world, but while easy on the eye, it isn't always the easiest place to call home. Northern communities provide many of the same services as their southern counterparts — and in spite of enormous distances, a harsher climate and far fewer people.

Under the Conservatives, the needs of Northerners were ignored. They often acted as though Ontario ends an hour North of Toronto. They took Northerners and Northern resources for granted, and excluded them from their policies while eroding quality of life.

When we were elected in 2003, we laid out our plan for strong Northern communities. Ontario’s rich natural resources come mainly from the hands of hard working Northerners. We’re giving Northerners the tools they need to build a more prosperous region.

Northern Ontarians want the same things all Ontarians want — opportunity for their children, a health care system they can rely upon and a strong and prosperous economy. So we focused on working closely with Northerners to strengthen our Northern industries, such as forestry and mining while at the same time, employing several approaches to diversify the Northern economy. We aimed to renew Northern Ontario’s infrastructure — so vital to this region’s future prosperity. And we set out to strengthen the basic needs our communities rely on to build the quality of life Ontarians deserve: health and education.

We’ve come a long way together, but there’s still more to do.

**CHANGE THAT’S WORKING**

**We promised to bring Northern Ontario to the table. We promised to ensure that the voice of the North is heard in cabinet and we promised to respect that voice.**

Of the seven Northern Liberal MPPs two are cabinet ministers, two are Parliamentary Assistants, one is the Chair of the Liberal Caucus and one is the Speaker of the House.

The Minister of Northern Development and Mines is Rick Bartolucci who represents the riding of Sudbury. Minister Bartolucci is the first Northerner to hold this post in over 10 years.

The Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs is David Ramsay who represents Timiskaming-Cochrane in Northern Ontario.

The Chair of Liberal caucus is Michael Gravelle who represents Thunder Bay- Superior North. Mr. Gravelle also sits on the important Planning and Priorities committee.

We have a strong Northern Liberal Caucus: MPPs, Ministers, and Parliamentary Assistants are bringing the Northern Ontario voice to Queen’s Park.

**We promised to help the North achieve its economic potential. We promised to stop the southward flow of government jobs and work with the private sector to create jobs and stimulate the Northern economy.**

We developed and delivered the Northern Prosperity Plan. The Plan lays out four pillars upon which the province is pursuing economic and community renewal in Northern Ontario. These include:

- Strengthening the North and its communities through unprecedented investments into the Northern Highways Program
- Listening to, and serving Northerners better
- Competing globally. We’ve launched an international marketing campaign that’s attracting investment to promote innovation and growth.
- Providing new opportunities for all. We’re forging better relationships and new partnerships with First Nations and Far North communities and expanding opportunities for youth employment and entrepreneurship.
We promised to help grow strong communities in the North. We promised to protect health care and education, while tailoring them to the specific needs of Northern Ontario.

In Health Care

We are providing better access to primary care in Northern Ontario with the creation of 29 Family Health Teams (FHTs). FHTs are designed around the needs of each community. They are made up of doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, dieticians, pharmacists, mental health workers and others depending on need.

After-hours patients can call a registered nurse through the Telephone Health Advisory Service.

We are improving access to health care and other services to strengthen communities with the creation of five new Community Health Centres (CHCs) and satellite CHCs in Northern Ontario. Made up of teams including physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, counselors, community workers and dieticians, CHCs specialize in providing care to Ontarians who face access barriers such as language, culture, physical disabilities, homelessness, poverty or geographic isolation. CHCs tailor their services directly in response to needs that exist in local communities.

We’re making it easier for Northerners to access health care services through the Northern Health Travel Grant program. Starting on July 1, 2007, the mileage rate increased from 34.25 cents per kilometer to 41 cents per kilometer.

We’re also working to speed up the payment process by upgrading the processing system, and for the first time we will support an accommodation allowance of up to $100 per night for each eligible trip beginning in January 2008.

We opened the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, with two campuses in Sudbury and Thunder Bay, and we’re providing $104.2 million in support over three years, to increase the training and retention of doctors in Northern Ontario communities.

We’re investing in new and expanded hospitals in communities in Northern Ontario including Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout, Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, North Bay and Mattawa.

We are introducing angioplasty services in Northwestern Ontario, based in Thunder Bay, and adding a new dedicated critical care air ambulance to serve Northwestern Ontario.

And we created Canada’s first nurse practitioner-led primary care clinic in Sudbury.

In Education

We are providing specific grants to help Northern boards meet their additional costs due to the size and location of their schools.

Funding for students of Northern boards has increased by more than 38 percent per student. To address higher costs, Northern students receive approximately $2,688 more per student than students in other boards.

Some boards have declining enrolment and their revenues tend to go down more quickly than costs. That’s why we provide a Declining Enrolment Adjustment (DEA) to support those boards as they adjust.

Funding for transportation of Northern students has increased 17 percent since we were elected.

We’re making sure every school has a secretary and a principal with the School Foundation Grant.

Northern boards will also benefit from the new Supported School allocation for schools with low enrolment that are a significant distance from other schools in the board.

We’re helping schools eliminate the fees youth and community groups pay to use Ontario’s schools after hours through the Community Use of Schools program.
Adjustments have been made to the funding formula to recognize the higher costs of building new additions and schools in rural and remote areas.

Northern boards are receiving school improvement construction funding for their high and urgent renewal needs thanks to the Good Places to Learn program. One time funding was provided province-wide through an Energy Retrofit to help schools become more energy efficient.

Additional funding was provided on a per-school basis for school libraries to replenish their resources.

We also established and renewed the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program that enables school kids to access fruit and vegetables in areas where there is little variety or choice.

And we created EatRight Ontario that allows people in the North — where there is reduced access to dieticians — with the opportunity to speak with a registered dietician about questions or concerns related to personal diet and nutrition.

**Listening To The North**

We promised to ensure that decisions affecting the North are made by a Northerner.

We have a strong, passionate and committed Northern Liberal Caucus: MPPs, Ministers, and Parliamentary Assistants are bringing the Northern Ontario voice to Queen’s Park. The Northern Caucus consists of Members who have a deep understanding of issues important to Northern residents.

Of the seven Northern Liberal MPPs two are cabinet ministers, two are Parliamentary Assistants, one is the Chair of the Liberal Caucus and one is the Speaker of the House.

The Minister of Northern Development and Mines is Rick Bartolucci who represents the riding of Sudbury. Minister Bartolucci is the first Northerner to hold this post in over 10 years.

The Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs is David Ramsay who represents Timiskaming-Cochrane in Northern Ontario.

The Chair of Liberal caucus is Michael Gravelle who represents Thunder Bay- Superior North. Mr. Gravelle also sits on the important Planning and Priorities committee.

We promised to create a direct link from Northern communities to the minister responsible for the North.

In 2005 we established Northern Development Councils (NDCs) to enhance citizen engagement and help make sure Northerners have a direct say in provincial decisions that affect the North. The four councils represent the Far North, Northeast, Northwest and Major Cities (Greater Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste.Marie, North Bay and Timmins). NDCs will continue to advise the Minister of Northern Development and Mines on the following priority areas:

- Fulfilling the government’s commitments related to Northern Ontario, including building economic opportunities
- Building strong Northern communities
- Working with natural resource sectors to strengthen their future role in Northern Ontario’s economy
- Furthering partnerships with Aboriginal communities.

In addition NDCs will work towards furthering existing policies and initiatives affecting Northerners as well as broader government commitments, such as student success, healthier Ontarians, strong communities, improving the environment, improving energy efficiency, and building opportunities for young people.
We promised to improve democratically-elected representation for the North.

We have passed the Election Statute Law Amendment Act, which preserves 11 Northern ridings ensuring fair representation.

We promised to respect the views of Northern constituents by giving their MPPs free votes. Under our Democratic Charter, MPPs will have the right to criticize government and even vote against government legislation if they think that is what is best for the people and communities they represent.

MPP’s are now allowed to vote against government legislation, with the exception of campaign promises and confidence matters.

Opportunity For The North

We promised to protect jobs in the North.

Under our mandate the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation has created 9,241 jobs and invested in 1,374 projects across the North, leveraging $1 billion in investment. Unemployment is down to 6.6 per cent in the North from 7.7 per cent in 2003.

We promised to help create jobs and spur economic growth.

We directed the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) to develop and deliver a refocused mandate. The NOHFC delivered six new programs designed to foster job creation and strengthen the economies of our Northern communities. They include:

- Enterprises North Job Creation Program
- Northern Ontario Young Entrepreneur Program
- Northern Ontario Youth Internship and Co-op Program

- Infrastructure and Community Development Program
- Emerging Technology Program
- Small Business Energy Conservation Program.

We aimed at new and expanding businesses in Northern communities. That’s why we delivered the Northern Ontario Grow Bonds pilot project in the 2004 Ontario Budget.

We’re promoting Northern Ontario investment opportunities to the world and helping attract new anchor investments and create jobs in the North with the GO North Investor Program.

We’re improving broadband internet and cellular service most of Northern Ontario through the new Northern Energy Program.

Under our mandate the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation has created 9,241 jobs and invested in 1,374 projects across the North, leveraging $1 billion in investment.

We promised to help young Northern entrepreneurs.

New programs, developed under the refocused Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) mandate, are providing opportunities for Northern Ontario youth, young entrepreneurs, business owners, communities, public-private partnerships and others across the North. Through the restructured NOHFC, over 515 youth have been able to secure co-op placements and internships and 86 young entrepreneurs have been able to create business opportunities.

We promised to help Northerners invest in their own communities.

We worked to expand businesses in Northern communities. We launched the Northern Ontario Grow Bonds sales campaign and set the bond’s interest rate to help Northerners invest in their communities through a
safe and competitive savings instrument, while actively contributing to the economy.

**We promised to stop the privatization of the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission.**

We stopped the previous government’s plans to privatize the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission (ONTC) and we set out a bold new course that will bring long-needed sustainability, certainty and openness to current and future planning for the organization. We have also asked the ONTC to develop a long-term strategy.

**We promised to work with Northern resource industries to ensure they achieve their potential.**

We’re promoting Northern Ontario investment opportunities to the world and helping attract new anchor investments and create jobs in the North with the GO North Investor Program.

We supported the Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation. Since we were elected, the value of mineral production in Ontario has reached an all-time high of $9.4 billion — $3.7 billion more than when we took office.

Since we were elected, the amount spent on the development of mineral facilities in Ontario has grown by $163 million to $377 million. The amount spent in Ontario on mineral exploration has almost doubled, estimated to be worth $371 million in 2007.

**Strong Northern Communities**

**We promised to guarantee funding to improve Northern highways.**

We delivered a multi-year plan for highway improvements and expansion in the North. It is a road map for Northern prosperity. The strategy increases investment in Northern highway infrastructure by nearly 40 per cent over five years while making sure the right investments are made at the right time. The projects outlined in the Northern Ontario Highways Strategy will create 45,000 jobs across the province and play a pivotal role in our plan for the economic prosperity of the province as a whole.

We signed the joint federal-provincial agreement on the Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program (SHIP). Through SHIP, the Government of Canada is making $485 million available to all provinces to improve and expand routes that have been designated as part of the National Highway System. Ontario’s share will be $168 million up to 2008-2009.

**We promised to allow the use of studded tires in the North.**

Owners of vehicles registered in Northern Ontario can now use lightweight Scandinavian studs in tires anywhere in Ontario from October 1 to April 30 under our Transportation Statute Law Act Amendment, 2005.

**We promised to provide stable, long-term funding for Northern communities.**

The Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) assists municipalities with their share of social program costs. We’ve increased funding by 12 per cent over Community Reinvestment Fund payments received in 2004.

**We promised to give Northern hunters a better shot at obtaining moose tags.**

We started running a second adult moose tag draw in 2005 for Northern residents. Northern residents who were unsuccessful in moose tag draws for the previous two years or longer are now eligible for the second draw. The ministry holds back five per cent of available Northern adult moose tags to use in the second draw.

We have worked with outfitters to maximize the value of tags allocated to the tourist industry.
We promised to make our drinking water safer.

We implemented every recommendation of the Walkerton Inquiry.

We now require communities to protect their municipal drinking water supplies with locally driven, science-based protection plans. We passed what the Sierra Legal Defence Fund called the toughest Clean Water Act in Canada.

We hired 33 drinking water inspectors to enforce new clean drinking water rules.

We expanded the water-monitoring network. There are now 462 monitoring locations — 100 more since 2003.

And we passed the You Spill, You Pay bill that means industrial polluters will be fined up to $100,00 per day they do not meet provincial standards.

We promised to build a new partnership with Ontario’s Aboriginal communities.

In June 2005, we presented our New Approach to Aboriginal Affairs to Aboriginal leaders and service providers. Since then we have been moving forward on a number of key commitments and initiatives including:

- An urban Aboriginal children and youth program called Akwe:go (December 2005)
- The Northern Table political forum to address challenges in the North (Letter of political agreement April 2007)
- Draft Consultation Guidelines to guide communications between the government and Ontario’s Aboriginal people (June 2006)

This new approach was developed based on the input received from Aboriginal leaders and organizations and reflects a new relationship, one based on cooperation and mutual respect.

The Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP) works with Aboriginal groups in order to:

- Increase participation by providing sport and recreation opportunities and reducing barriers to participation
- Encourage healthy lifestyles and promote active living, thereby reducing health risks both physical and emotional
- Improve volunteer and community capacity building
- Train youth and adults in sport and recreation leadership roles
- Increase awareness of risks associated with problem gambling and how to access support and treatment services.

Since 2004, MHP has invested in:

- Local and provincial Aboriginal projects across Ontario through the Communities In Action Fund
- The Aboriginal component of the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy, to help Aboriginal communities break the cycle of smoking addiction
- The Aboriginal component of Ontario’s Action Plan for Healthy Eating and Active Living.
Better Health Care In The North

We promised to make the travel grant more responsive to the health care needs of Northerners.

We’re making it easier for Northerners to access health care services through the Northern Health Travel Grant program. Starting on July 1, 2007, the mileage rate increased from 34.25 cents per kilometer to 41 cents per kilometer.

We’re also working to speed up the payment process by upgrading the processing system, and for the first time we will support an accommodation allowance of up to $100 per night for each eligible trip beginning in January 2008.

We promised to increase the number of doctors and nurses working in the North.

We are creating 29 Family Health Teams in Northern Ontario, teams of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals working together to provide better care to their patients. There are 171 doctors working in Family Health Teams in the North, providing family health care to 132,600 Northerners, including 13,290 who didn’t have a doctor before.

We are creating five new Community Health Centres (CHCs) and satellite CHCs in Northern Ontario, to increase access to health care and other services and strengthen communities. Made up of teams that include physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, counselors, community workers and dieticians, CHCs specialize in providing care to Ontarians who face access barriers such as language, culture, physical disabilities, homelessness, poverty or geographic isolation. CHCs tailor their services directly in response to needs that exist in local communities.

We’re increasing the training and retention of doctors in Northern Ontario communities with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. It has a campus in Sudbury and Thunder Bay. There are 56 spaces available each year. In 2008, when the school reaches full capacity, 224 medical students will be learning and training in the North.

We’re introducing angioplasty services in Northwestern Ontario. The service will be based in Thunder Bay, and will support doctors providing this new service.

We’re supporting nursing students interested in practising in rural, remote or under-serviced communities by helping with their tuition costs.

We are supporting registered nurses training to become nurse practitioners and fill vacant positions, many of which are located in rural and remote communities, through our Grow Your Own Nurse Practitioner program.

So far, we’ve hired more than 650 nurses in the North.

We’re proud Canada’s first nurse practitioner-led primary care clinic is in Sudbury.

We promised to deliver better family health care to Northern communities through family health teams.

We are providing better access to primary care in Northern Ontario with the creation of 29 Family Health Teams (FHTs). FHTs are designed around the needs of each community. They are made up of doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, dieticians, pharmacists, mental health workers and others depending on need.

After-hours patients can call a registered nurse through the Telephone Health Advisory Service.

We promised to improve long-term care for our seniors.

We’re helping seniors live independently in their communities longer. That’s why we increased funding to seniors’ centres for social and recreation services and education on issues such as Alzheimer’s disease.

We are also running the Falls Prevention Seminar series to help seniors live safe, active and independent lives.
With the number of seniors expected to double over the next 25 years, this is the time to strengthen long-term care, so we increased annual funding for long-term care homes by almost $800 million.

We delivered new legislation to improve care in long-term care homes, and listened during the legislative process. The Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007, includes:

- A requirement that long-term care homes meet new staffing and care standards that will be set in regulation to provide the best possible care to residents
- Whistle-blowing protection for staff, residents and volunteers who report abuse or neglect
- An enhanced and more enforceable Residents’ Bill of Rights
- Requirement that a registered nurse be on-site and on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Restricting the use of restraints to limited circumstances where it is absolutely necessary and only with appropriate safeguards
- Defined licence terms for long-term care homes of up to 25 years; licences can be revoked in cases of non-compliance.

We funded new staff including 1,200 new nurses and we introduced surprise annual home inspections for long-term care homes.

We delivered a five-year strategy to combat elder abuse and extended the strategy for an additional two years. We provided grants to sixty-one community organizations working to prevent elder abuse and are continuing this investment in the current fiscal year.

**Better Education In The North**

**We promised to respond to the educational needs of Northern communities.**

We are providing specific grants to help Northern boards meet their additional costs due to the size and location of their schools.

Funding for students of Northern boards has increased by more than 38 per cent per student. To address higher costs, Northern students receive approximately $2,688 more per student than students in other boards.

Some boards have declining enrolment and their revenues tend to go down more quickly than costs. That’s why we provide a Declining Enrolment Adjustment (DEA) to support those boards as they adjust.

Funding for transportation of Northern students has increased 17 per cent since we were elected.

We’re making sure every school has a secretary and a principal with the School Foundation Grant.

Northern boards will also benefit from the new Supported School allocation for schools with low enrolment that are a significant distance from other schools in the board.

We’re helping schools eliminate the fees youth and community groups pay to use Ontario’s schools after hours through the Community Use of Schools program.

Adjustments have been made to the funding formula to recognize the higher costs of building new additions and schools in rural and remote areas.

Northern boards are receiving school improvement construction funding for their high and urgent renewal needs thanks to the Good Places to Learn program. One time funding was provided province-wide through an Energy Retrofit to help schools become more energy efficient.

Additional funding was provided on a per-school basis for school libraries to replenish their resources.
We promised to protect Northern schools.

We put a moratorium on school closures in 2003. In October 2006 we introduced new guidelines outlining the process school boards must follow when considering closing a school, serving as an important tool for parents and communities. These guidelines will ensure a transparent process and require that school boards carefully consider a school’s value to its students and to the communities they call home.

We promised to invest in Northern colleges and universities.

Funding for Northern and rural colleges and universities is way up. We’re investing in our post-secondary schools to make sure quality continues to improve.

We opened Ontario’s first ever medical school for the North. The Northern Ontario School of Medicine has two campuses — one in Sudbury, one in Thunder Bay — and a mandate to focus on medical education that addresses the unique needs and characteristics of rural and Northern Ontario. It will mean more doctors practicing in rural and Northern communities.

We promised to invest in public education.

We have increased education funding by $3.7 billion, or 29 per cent per student. This funding means more resources while at the same time allowing flexibility in responding to local needs, including the Learning Opportunities, Remote and Rural, Declining Enrolment and English as a Second Language grants. We have increased funding to each.

We’ve introduced new grants allowing school boards to respond to local needs, including:

1. Program Enhancement Grant: supports programs and activities such as arts, music, physical education and outdoor education. Each board will have the flexibility to decide how to use this funding to best suit its students’ needs.

2. Supported Schools Allocation: expands school-based support for small Ontario communities where schools have low enrolment and are a significant distance from other schools under the board. This additional funding will benefit 177 schools.

3. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Supplement: supports the goal of improved achievement for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. This grant will help boards offer and expand Native Language and Native Studies courses, and support programs that assist Aboriginal students.

4. School foundation Grant: helps put small and rural schools on an equal footing with larger schools by ensuring that every school has a principal and secretary, regardless of the number of students enrolled.

CHANGE IN PROGRESS

We promised to cut the waiting time for Northern Health Travel Grant payments in half.

We’re working to speed up the payment process by upgrading the processing system. Starting on July 1 2007, the mileage rate increased from 34.25 cents per kilometer to 41 cents per kilometer, and for the first time we will support an accommodation allowance of up to $100 per night for each eligible trip beginning in January 2008.

OVER AND ABOVE

NATURAL RESOURCES

Minister’s Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness

We established the Minister’s Council on Forest Sector Competitiveness that provides advice on strengthening Ontario’s forest industry. The coun-
cil includes three municipal leaders, six forest industry representatives, two First Nation delegates, two labour designates, one environmental authority and three independent experts.

**Energy Efficiency in Our Mills**

We’re helping Northern pulp and paper mills achieve energy efficiency and sustainability by offering rebates that could reduce the electricity costs of participating companies by 15 per cent over the next three years.

**Stimulating the Forestry Sector**

In total, we’re making more than $1 billion available through various programs to assist the forest sector over five years. These programs will help stimulate new investments in value-added manufacturing and co-generation as the industry becomes more competitive and transitions into the future.

The initiatives include:

- Loan guarantees to stimulate new investment in value-added manufacturing, energy conservation and energy co-generation
- Conditional grants to support new capital investments
- Electricity rebates for Northern pulp and paper mills
- Annual construction and maintenance costs of primary and secondary forest access roads
- One-time stumpage fee refund for 2005-2006
- Annual investments to enhance the Forest Resource Inventory
- Reductions in timber fees for poplar veneer and white birch, since 2006
- The Ontario Wood Promotion program to enhance value-added manufacturing.

**Great Lakes Charter Annex**

Proposed amendments to the Ontario Water Resources Act (OWRA) and other legislation will strengthen the management, protection and conservation of Ontario’s valuable water resources, including the waters of the Great Lakes for future generations. The legislation would also prohibit new or increased diversions of water from one Great Lake watershed to another in Ontario, subject to strictly regulated exceptions.

Ontario continues to take its stewardship role of Great Lakes and Ontario’s valuable water resources seriously, and is acting decisively with this proposed legislation to ensure Ontario’s water is among the best protected in the world.

**Energy**

**Water Power**

We’re increasing Ontario’s renewable energy supply and providing for Northern Ontario and Aboriginal community economic development through a strong commitment to waterpower development. We’re working towards our renewable energy commitments by making Crown land available for waterpower projects. These projects will contribute to our target of generating 10 percent of Ontario’s total capacity from new renewable sources by 2010.

Since 2004, 14 new opportunities to develop waterpower on Crown land have been released through the Competitive Site Release Process. Applicant of record status has been subsequently awarded for six sites. Companies awarded applicant of record status can now pursue environmental assessment and other approvals to build waterpower facilities. Collectively, the six sites have the potential to deliver approximately 58 megawatts of new gen-
eration resulting in enough power to supply approximately 52,000 homes with electricity.

Wind Power

We are just beginning to unlock Ontario’s enormous potential for clean and efficient electricity generation — Sault Ste Marie is home to the largest wind farm in Canada. We will continue to seek and encourage development of our capacity to generate power from renewable energy sources ensuring Ontarians have cleaner air to breathe and a healthier environment.

Wind turbines on both private and Crown land will help reduce our dependence on coal-fired electricity generated plants.

Training Colleges and Universities

Attracting Youth to Science and Technology

We created the Youth Science and Technology Outreach Program. The program motivates and encourages youth to develop an interest in science and technology. It promotes science awareness activities to at-risk youth and youth living in rural and remote communities.

More Support to students from under-represented groups

We are providing $10 million annually for programs and services to support approximately 7,600 Aboriginal postsecondary students. In 2005-2006, the government invested more than $1 million to help universities and colleges deliver projects to improve outreach, transition and retention of Aboriginal students.

We’re also supporting Aboriginal postsecondary students through special-purpose grants for colleges and universities:

- The Aboriginal Education and Training Strategy works to increase Aboriginal participation and completion rates in universities and colleges, foster sensitivity to Aboriginal cultures and include Aboriginal partners in decisions affecting Aboriginal postsecondary education. Eligible colleges and universities have received funding for programs and services such as counselors, support services projects, curriculum development and funding to offset the incremental costs of delivering Aboriginal postsecondary programming.
- The Aviation Pilot - Fixed Wing Aboriginal Program is delivered through Canadore College at the First Nations Technical Institute
- Aboriginal teacher education programs are offered at Brock University, Lakehead University and Nipissing University
- The Native Nurses Entry Program at Lakehead University provides Aboriginal students with the requisite skills and academic preparation to enter the four-year nursing degree program.

Tourism

Tourism Revitalization Program

In February 2004, we committed $30 million in new funding to help revitalize Ontario’s tourism industry including $2.8 million earmarked for Northern tourism marketing initiatives, recognizing the unique needs of Northern communities.
Arts & Culture Matter

The Ontario Liberal Plan for Strong Cultural Industries
Ontario is home to a rich diversity of cultures, histories, languages and traditions. Arts and culture give expression to our hopes, fears, regrets, celebrations, memories and longings. Arts and culture are profoundly human. Simply put: they enrich the enjoyment of our lives.

A society does not reveal itself though its golf courses or its roads; but through its songs, dance, poetry, plays, paintings, architecture and films. Plato, 2,300 years ago, wrote, “tell me who writes a nation’s songs, for I care not who writes its laws.”

We’re fortunate in Ontario to have people who care deeply about the value of creativity and who are eager to share the history of our common humanity.

Under the Conservatives, Ontario’s arts organizations suffered chronic neglect and underfunding. It was a time of missed opportunity.

According to Richard Florida, an economist and urban studies theorist at the University of Toronto, the most prosperous economies are those where the arts are thriving and diverse cultures comfortably exist. Regions with high concentrations of creative talent play an important role in bringing innovation and prosperity to their populations.

When we were elected in 2003, we set out a plan to put the arts and culture prominently in our schools, on our stages, and in our towns and cities. We support Ontario’s artists and cultural organizations so they can help us achieve the civil society and quality of life the people of this province deserve.

We focused on the needs of the arts community. We listened and responded to what that community told us. We made arts education a part of the school curriculum — because we know it raises academic achievement in all areas, not just the arts. We know that our arts organizations give us an edge in competing in a global, knowledge-based economy. We want to promote the talent Ontario has to offer. And we want to give Ontarians the opportunity to experience what the rest of the world has to offer by attracting talent to cultural centres and communities across the province. We aimed to make Ontario a cultural destination.

We’ve come a long way together, and there’s still more to do.

**CHANGE THAT’S WORKING**

**Listening To the Arts Community**

We promised to immediately establish a Minister’s Advisory Council for Arts and Culture.

We established the Minister’s Advisory Council for Arts and Culture in 2004. This 15-member diverse Council provides a forum for discussion and advice to the Minister on building strong and vibrant communities in Ontario.

We promised that within the first two years of our mandate, this Council would produce a Report on the Status of the Artist in Ontario in the 21st Century. This report would be used to develop Status of the Artist legislation for Ontario’s artists.

The report was submitted to the Minister in 2006, after one of the largest consultations ever undertaken. Over 4,000 individual artists, groups, unions and cultural organizations participated.

The Act formally recognizes the value and contributions artists make to our creative economy, quality of life and sense of identity.
**Investing In Home Grown Talent**

We promised to provide stable, predictable funding based on a three-year period so that arts and cultural organizations can make sound decisions for the future of their programs.

We increased annual funding to the Ontario Arts Council and Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). Funding to the OTF will increase 20 per cent to help community-based initiatives in arts and culture, environment, human and social services, and sport and recreation sectors. The operating grants through the OTF are for organizations’ ongoing program costs and are awarded for a period of one to five years.

We promised to invest in the Ontario Arts Council in our first mandate.

The 2007-2008 Budget allocated an additional $15 million over three years to the Ontario Arts Council (OAC). This means funding to the OAC will increase to almost $55 million by 2009-2010. By 2009 we will have more than doubled funding to the OAC.

We promised to ensure that funding for arts organizations goes where the need is greatest — to operational funding rather than endowments.

Along with the increase in operational funding to the Ontario Arts Council and Ontario Trillium Foundation, we increased the Community Museum Operating Grants by 85 per cent over 2006-2007, starting in 2007-2008.

In 2007, we provided $10 million in one time funding to the Arts Endowment Fund.

**Arts Education**

We promised to establish lighthouse schools to develop and showcase best practices in education, including best practices in the arts.

We established lighthouse schools to highlight literacy and numeracy.

We also funded a Program Enhancement Grant that was allocated in every school board in Ontario for specialists such as music teachers and outdoor educators.

We have invested in arts education. We hired 1,925 specialist teachers in music and phys-ed and we partnered with the Royal Conservatory of Music to train teachers to deliver core curriculum subjects using an interactive, arts-based approach.

And, we have invested in 10 arts education pilot projects.

**Re-Investing In Our Film and Television Industry**

We promised to boost the Ontario Film and Television Tax credit from 20 per cent to 33 per cent.

We increased the Ontario Film and Television Tax Credit from 20 to 30 per cent for five years, and maintained the 10 per cent regional bonus credit for productions made outside of the GTA.

We also increased the Ontario Production Services Tax Credit for foreign productions from 11 to 18 per cent. We extended this increase to March 31, 2008.

In the 2006 Budget we included an extension of the Ontario Interactive Digital Media Tax Credit, expanded eligibility to games developers and other content producers, while also increasing the rebate level 10 per cent.
We promised to introduce a new feature film component of the Ontario Film and Television Tax Credit and increase this credit from 20 per cent to 40 per cent of eligible expenditures.

We enhanced a tax credit as part of the Ontario Film and Television Tax Credit so that first time producers are eligible for up to 40 per cent of their labour costs up to the first $240,000.

We also increased the Ontario Production Services Tax Credit for foreign productions from 11 to 18 per cent. Because of this increase we were able to draw blockbuster productions to Ontario.

**Inspiring A New Generation of Artists**

We promised to open up opportunities for apprenticeships in the arts, film and television industries to increase the flow of talent into the arts.

The Entertainment and Creative Cluster Partnerships Fund is a three-year program aimed at supporting partnerships by Ontario’s Entertainment and Creative Cluster stakeholders to develop new approaches and solutions.

We created a pilot project to provide artists with business support through training seminars at Small Business Enterprise Centres held all across Ontario.

We invested in the Canadian Film Centre for training and apprenticeships in film, TV and new media.

And we invested in cultural organizations such as the Stratford Festival, Women in Film & Television, Ontario Museums Association, Cultural Career Council of Ontario, and Hot Docs.

**Promoting Cultural Centres**

We promised to work with cities to attract talented artists and entrepreneurs, as well as businesses interested in capitalizing on that talent.

We’re improving Municipal Cultural Planning to generate more effective downtown revitalization, tourism promotion, and job growth. This in turn creates connections between culture and business. More than 32 municipalities have developed cultural plans.

We ran a pilot funds-matching program in communities across Ontario with the goal of encouraging arts organizations to partner with businesses.

In January, organizations representing Ontario’s cultural industries participated in the Premier’s business mission to India. It enabled our industries to boost Ontario’s profile as a producer of innovative and quality entertainment products, and to seek new business opportunities in one of the world’s fastest-growing economies.

We promised to encourage municipalities to develop cultural plans that highlight their arts and culture offerings and build their talent base.

We engaged in Municipal Culture Planning Forums with 35 municipalities. Five municipalities have adopted integrated cultural plans: Ajax, Barrie, Ingersoll, Orillia and Prince Edward County.

In 2004 only two per cent of municipalities were involved in community planning. As a result of the forums, 70 per cent of municipalities report having a cultural policy or plan.
**Honouring Excellence In The Arts**

We promised to establish the Premier’s Medal for Excellence in the Arts. This annual award will be given to an individual or organization that has made an outstanding contribution to arts and culture in Ontario.

We launched the first Premier’s Award for Excellence in Arts and Culture in 2006. The winner received $35,000 of the $50,000 prize and chose an emerging talent to receive $15,000 for the creation of a new work.

**Preserving Our Cultural Heritage**

We promised to rewrite the Ontario Heritage Act to safeguard Ontario heritage properties for future generations.

We strengthened heritage protection in Ontario through major revisions to the Ontario Heritage Act. The amendments provide new municipal and provincial powers to identify and protect heritage sites and districts, marine heritage sites and archaeological resources. Preserving our heritage contributes to local economic prosperity by promoting cultural tourism and downtown revitalization. It also adds to the quality of life in communities across Ontario.

**OVER AND ABOVE**

**Cultural Renaissance Projects**

We are supporting construction at key Ontario cultural landmarks to promote Ontario as a cultural destination. Projects include the Royal Ontario Museum, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the National Ballet School, the Gardiner Museum, the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Canadian Opera Company.

**Community Libraries**

We are enhancing the role of Ontario’s libraries, especially in rural, northern, francophone and First Nations communities.

**Arts Education**

We launched arts education programs for children and youth across the province. Arts education contributes to success for students across the curriculum. We know learning through the arts supports higher academic achievement and improved cognitive development.
Opportunity for Everyone

The Ontario Liberal Plan for Strong, Diverse Communities
Ontario is the most culturally diverse place in the world. Every day we are reminded that we are all part of the same large community; that what matters most is not the colour of our skin, the language we speak, the faith we embrace or the power we wield. What matters most is our common humanity. We have the privilege of living in a province and in a country that celebrates diversity.

In the words of Sir Wilfred Laurier, spoken more than 140 years ago: “I say it is to our glory, that the struggles of race are ended on Canadian soil. There is here no other family than the human family, whatever the language they speak or the altars at which they kneel.” We share Laurier’s vision, and his belief that Canada’s best days always lie ahead. The Conservatives opposed Laurier’s vision then, and they still do today.

Under the Conservatives, Ontario’s talented and motivated newcomers faced underemployment, unemployment and poverty. In fact, in 2003 the Conservatives put their plans for newcomers under the Crime section of their platform.

We know that by leveraging our common strengths, and our common ties, we can make our relationships in the global economy even stronger. We recognize that we must take advantage of the talents and skills that arrive in Ontario every day. Because when our newcomers succeed, Ontario succeeds.

That’s why when were elected in 2003 we laid out a plan to make sure our newcomers could succeed in the shortest time possible. We strengthened our education system to give them the tools they need to succeed.

We’re breaking down barriers for newcomers so they can put their talents and skills to use to benefit all Ontarians. We’re helping professionals get certified in Ontario. We’re helping students get into our colleges and universities. And we’re providing training programs to bridge the gap between arriving here, and living here.

Together, we’ve come a long way, but there’s still more to do.
past three years. We’re confident we can make even more progress for Ontario’s youngest learners.

We promised to make high quality childcare and education available for our youngest learners.

We met our goal of creating 22,000 new childcare spaces for Ontario families, including spaces in 40 new schools. These spaces will be sustained for the next four years.

We also delivered a new childcare funding model so that more low and middle-income families will qualify for childcare subsidies. We increased the deduction limit for informal childcare for social assistance recipients from $390 to $600 per month per child to provide another childcare option for working parents.

We pledged our support to the 54 Parent and Family Literacy Centres in the Toronto District School Board and created 32 new centres across the province. Almost 17,000 children and over 14,000 adults will be able to use a Parent and Family Literacy Centre in 2007-2008 to help their children learn and succeed.

Economic Growth: The Important Role of Diversity

We promised to freeze tuition for two years and help our neediest students with tuition waivers.

We froze tuition for two years. After the freeze, post-secondary institutions were limited to five per cent tuition increases.

No qualified Ontario student will be prevented from attending Ontario’s colleges and universities because they can’t afford it. Students in need will have access to resources for their tuition, books and mandatory fees.

We introduced access grants for first and second-year students from low-income families to cover up to half of their tuition costs. If they are in first year, these students can also qualify for matching federal grants to cover their full tuition.

Over the last three years, 145,000 students have benefitted from increases to student aid.

We promised to make room for 50,000 more Ontario students at our colleges and universities.

Since 2002-2003, over 86,000 more students have enrolled in Ontario’s universities — a 22 per cent increase. Each of these new spaces was fully-funded by the McGuinty government.

We promised to double the number of our apprenticeships over five years.

In our first three years of our mandate we doubled the number of new apprentices registered annually. In 2006-2007, we registered 25,469 new apprentices and we look forward to an expected 26,000 new apprentices for 2007-2008.

Full Participation In The Workforce

We promised to put our brain gain to work.

We’re putting our brain gain to work with our plan, Breaking Down Barriers.

We created Global Experience Ontario, an Access Centre for Internationally Trained Individuals that is a one-stop resource centre to help newcomers enter regulated professions and promotes internships and mentoring programs.

Employers can now nominate individuals for immigration based on market needs, because we launched Ontario’s first-ever pilot Provincial Nominee Program.
We've placed 72 newcomers in 15 Ministries in fields such as chemistry, environment, health and business administration. Many newcomers face the same frustrating roadblock — they can't get a job without Canadian work experience and they can't get Canadian work experience if they don't get a job. We're helping to clear a path with the first-ever Internship Program for Internationally Trained Individuals.

We expanded services to create three new Job Connect centres in Brampton, Markham and Toronto. We expanded services for newcomers in Peel Region, York Region and Toronto.

We created Newcomer Employment Networks in London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Niagara and Ottawa where community organizations partner with the business sector to promote the value of hiring newcomers.

We're helping thousands of newcomers in 100 trades and professions in over 90 Bridge Training projects.

We promised to remove barriers that prevent foreign-trained professionals and skilled workers from reaching their potential.

In Ontario, our Fair Access to Professions Act means a fair, open and timely licensing process to assess the credentials of foreign trained professionals.

We established the Office of the Fairness Commissioner who is responsible for evaluating registration and licensing practices.

We promised to create an Ontario Internet portal for skilled immigrants.

We launched www.OntarioImmigration.ca to support newcomers both in Ontario and abroad, prior to arrival.

We also launched Global Experience Ontario — a one-stop access and resource centre in Toronto where internationally trained and educated individuals can help find out how to qualify for professional practice in Ontario.

We promised to make sure our educational institutions are accessible to new Ontarians.

We're making record investments in our post-secondary students and facilities — the largest in 40 years. We're delivering:

✓ A strategy to attract more international students and encourage study abroad for Ontario students

✓ More access to labour market services for new Canadians and prospective apprentices

✓ An expanded Bridge Training program to provide training and work experience for skilled new Canadians

✓ Better access to college training and jobs for new Canadian students

✓ Pilot programs to help employers better recognize and use the skills of new Canadians

Leveraging Our Diversity

We promised to leverage our diversity to attract investment.

We executed a foreign investment strategy and in 2005-2006 alone, attracted 7,260 jobs through 30 investment deals valued at over $950 million.

We led business missions to India, Pakistan, China, Germany, Austria, Japan, Italy, the United Kingdom, the United States and Scandinavia, giving Ontario businesses the opportunity to connect directly with global markets.

We created partnerships around the world: Maharashtra, India; New Jersey, USA; Baden-Wuerttemberg, Germany; Jiangsu Province, China; Antofagasta Region, Chile; Punjab, Pakistan; Lombardi, Italy; Portugal; and Israel.
We announced seven new International Marketing Centres to showcase our province and workforce to the world: Tokyo, London, Los Angeles, New Delhi, Beijing, Paris and Mexico City.

*We promised to take advantage of the more than 200 consulates and embassies in Ontario.*

We took advantage of our proximity to over 200 embassies and consulates and executed a foreign investment strategy. In 2006-2007, we attracted 38 deals worth $670 million supporting 8,411 jobs. In 2005-2006, we attracted 7,260 jobs through 30 investment deals valued at over $950 million as a result of the Premier’s missions to China and India.

*We promised to bring the next generation of global customer-service operations to Ontario.*

We have a network of International Marketing Centres positioned to bring investment to Ontario (Los Angeles, New Delhi, New York, Munich, London, Shanghai and Tokyo, with Mexico City to be opened this fall). Ontario is home to many global customer-service leaders. The availability of high-end skills and infrastructure in Ontario has led to the development of a rapidly growing outsourcing sector.

India’s four largest outsourcing companies — Wipro, Infosys, TCS and Satyam, each have a significant presence in Ontario. This link has been strengthened since the Premier’s business mission to India.

In 2006-2007, we attracted 38 international investment deals worth $670 million. This investment brought 1,500 jobs in skilled sales and technical support.

*Promoting The Culture of Many Cultures*

*We promised to celebrate the artistic and cultural contributions of the many diverse groups in the province.*

We’re supporting community projects that promote our diversity and increase awareness of Ontario’s rich heritage.

*We promised to help showcase our own talent on the international stage.*

We increased funding to the Ontario Arts Council, which provides support for international touring to a wide range of artists and arts organizations.

We’re creating a permanent home for the Toronto International Film Festival, positioning Ontario on the forefront of the global entertainment economy.

We supported the first annual LuminaTO Festival of Arts and Creativity that showcased our province’s artists and vibrant culture scene.

In 2007, cultural industries were represented on the Premier’s business mission to India, which provided an opportunity to showcase our cultural sector and investigate opportunities for business growth.

*Full Participation Of New Canadians: Better Immigration And Settlement Services*

*We promised to negotiate an immigration settlement agreement with the federal government.*

We negotiated the first-ever Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement, which quadruples federal spending on language training and settlement services. Average annual spending for settlement services in Ontario quadrupled to approximately $3,400 per new Canadian.
We promised to work with community-based organizations to help new Ontarians make the transition to life in Ontario as easily and quickly as possible.

We know that Ontario’s diversity is one of our greatest strengths. Ontario is a place where people from all over the world come together to create something beautiful: a strong and diverse society.

We’re helping to strengthen the economic advantage provided by our diversity. Ontario invests more than any other province in newcomer services. We expanded the Newcomer Settlement Program by 29 per cent to support 81 community agencies providing settlement services for newcomers. We’re helping newcomers find their way when they arrive in Canada so they can start their lives here quicker and easier.

We’re proud of the diversity we have in Ontario. It’s in our best interest to take advantage of the skills and knowledge that arrive here daily. That’s why we’re delivering more than 90 Bridge Training projects to help thousands of newcomers work in over 100 trades and professions.

We’re providing Occupation-Specific Language Training, English as a Second Language, French as a Second Language and Citizenship and Language Training.

We launched the first-ever Internship Program for Internationally Trained Individuals in the Ontario Public Service where 72 newcomers have been placed in 15 Ministries.

We created a Foreign Trained Professionals Loans Program to cover assessment, training and exam costs, in partnership with the Maytree Foundation.

We launched www.OntarioImmigration.ca to support newcomers both in Ontario and abroad, prior to arrival.

We also launched Global Experience Ontario — a one-stop access and resource centre in Toronto where internationally trained and educated people can learn how to qualify for professional practice in Ontario.

And we have created three new Job Connect centres in Brampton, Markham and Toronto — Ontario’s high-growth areas.

We’re providing language interpreter services to help newcomers who have experienced domestic abuse receive support in their native language.

And we’re teaching newcomers about Ontario’s history, geography, laws and civic participation with All About Ontario, the province’s first citizenship curriculum. We’re helping newcomers understand Ontario’s traditions and the responsibilities of citizenship for a successful transition to life in Ontario. The program will be incorporated into ESL and FSL classes through school boards across the province.

Safe Communities

We promised to put 1,000 more police on the street.

There are 1,000 new police officers in Ontario communities, thanks to the Safer Communities-1,000 Officers Partnership Program.

There are an additional 60 officers fighting guns and gangs outside of Toronto and 200 new officers will be added to OPP ranks.

We promised to expand the number of hate crimes units in the province.

We formed the Hate Crimes Working Group to make recommendations on how to better address hate crimes, improve services for victims and prevent further victimization.

We supported investigative and intelligence services and expanded the Joint Forces hate Crimes/Extremism Investigative Team.

We developed a training and education package for police officers; provided grants to various community organizations to support victims of hate crimes; and established a team of Crown attorneys specially trained in hate crime legislation.
We promised to move the Ontario Human Rights Commission from the Ministry of Citizenship to the Ministry of the Attorney General.

We moved the Ontario Human Rights Commission to the Ministry of the Attorney General and shortened the process from complaint to resolution.

**Keeping All Ontarians Healthy**

We promised to train and recruit more family doctors in communities across Ontario.

We're increasing family medicine residency positions by 70 per cent, which will mean 337 new family doctors in Ontario by 2008.

To reach our goal of 337 new family doctors by 2008, our investment includes capital funding for family medicine teaching sites associated with medical schools at McMaster University, the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto, the University of Western Ontario and Queen's University.

And we're supporting the increased costs associated with training more family medicine residents through operating funding over four years.

We are attracting more health care professionals to the province and we made more room in medical schools. We’re increasing medical school spaces by 23 per cent. We’re opening satellite medical school campuses in Mississauga, St. Catharines, Kitchener-Waterloo and Windsor.

We also opened the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. The two campuses — one in Sudbury, one in Thunder Bay — have a mandate to focus on medical education that addresses the unique needs and characteristics of rural and northern Ontario. It will mean more doctors practicing in rural and northern communities.

We promised to remove barriers preventing well-qualified foreign-trained physicians from practicing in Ontario.

We’re increasing the number of international medical graduates (IMGs) working in the province. This investment has:

- Established the Access Centre for Internationally Educated Health Professionals, which provides information on how to achieve licensing requirements to work in health care in Ontario
- Established IMG-Ontario where eligible foreign-trained physicians are screened and then directed to an assessment or training position, leading to their being registered to practise in the province
- More than doubled the number of IMG training and assessment positions to 200 annually
- Funded a program that registers experienced physicians who are currently practising outside the province
- Created a pilot program to help IMGs who are not working as physicians to use their transferable skills and explore alternative employment opportunities in other areas of the health sector

We are breaking down barriers: Since 2003, approximately 750 foreign-trained doctors received certificates to practice in Ontario and there are currently 500 foreign-trained doctors enrolled in ministry-funded training and assessment programs. We surpassed our own targets when we offered a record 218 positions to foreign trained doctors in 2006. For the past three years, most of the licences issued in Ontario were to foreign-trained doctors.
We promised to enhance protection for Ontarians who use non-traditional medicine.

We’re regulating traditional Chinese Medicine through the Traditional Chinese Medicine Act.

And we established new colleges to regulate four more health professions — naturopathy, homeopathy, kinesiology and psychotherapy through the Health System Improvements Act.

OVER AND ABOVE

Training, Colleges and Universities

More support to students from under-represented groups.

In 2006-2007, we worked to better inform, advise and encourage more first generation students to attend a college or university, or become an apprentice.

We’re also investing $1 million in Ontario First Generation Bursaries.