

Ministry of Infrastructure

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Ministère de l'Infrastructure

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The Government of Ontario is officially proclaiming May 15-21, 2011, as National Public Works Week in Ontario. We are pleased to take this opportunity to celebrate the thousands of dedicated individuals in this sector whose fine work to develop our vital public works and infrastructure makes a difference in the lives of all Ontarians.

Ontario's public infrastructure plays a crucial role in strengthening our economy and improving our quality of life. I want to thank you and your organization for the positive contributions you have made to our communities and Ontario's economy.

For your information, I have attached a copy my statement to the House on May 16, 2011. I look forward to joining you and fellow members of the Ontario Public Works Association in celebrating National Public Works Week.

Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Chiarelli".

Bob Chiarelli
Minister of Infrastructure

Enclosure

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

I rise in the Legislature today to draw our collective attention to the vital public works and infrastructure that support our economy and just about every aspect of our lives.

From the roads, highways and bridges that take Ontario families to and from work safely and transport goods efficiently ... To the transit systems that move us within and between our communities.

To the schools, colleges and universities where Ontario students learn and grow ...

The parks, recreation centres and ice rinks where we pause to play.

The pipes that deliver safe drinking water ...

And the broadband internet towers that connect us to the world ...

Infrastructure supports everything Ontario businesses and families do.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the McGuinty Government, it gives me great pleasure to declare this week, May 15 to May 21, 2011, National Public Works Week in Ontario.

I would like to take a moment to thank the thousands of dedicated people who work in this sector.

I would like to recognize in the Legislative Chamber today, representatives of the Ontario Public Works Association, including: Mr. Sal Iannello, from the City of Welland, who is the President-Elect of the OPWA; Mr. Terry Hardy, Executive Director as well as the other representatives of the Ontario Public Works Association here today.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to call on all Members here today to join me in acknowledging the fine work of these men and women – and those across the sector — who help to keep Ontario moving..

Working together, we've helped to improve infrastructure across the province.

Upgrading thousands of kilometres of highways and dozens of bridges;

Building and expanding hospitals and hundreds of new schools;

Repairing or replacing aging water systems;

And adding thousands of new spaces for students at colleges and universities.

Our unprecedented investments have helped people get to where they need to go, faster.

They've sped up access to education and health care in communities across Ontario.

And they've helped grow our economy.

Ontario is turning the corner.

And because of investments made to stimulate growth and combat the global economic downturn, today, Canada's recovery is consistently cited as among the world's best.

I'm very proud to say, Mr. Speaker, that Ontario has played a critical role in that recovery.

In April, Ontario had an increase of 56,000 jobs and the unemployment rate declined to 7.9 per cent.

That's the lowest unemployment rate since December 2008.

And the Conference Board of Canada reported that Ontario's infrastructure investments helped to create or protect nearly 225,000 jobs across the province in 2010.

Indeed, we are turning the corner.

And our plan for jobs and growth is working.

Working with our federal and municipal partners, we've invested in projects that are creating jobs, and benefiting communities across Ontario.

Projects like:

- The Milton Arts & Cultural Centre
- The expanded Wilfred Laurier University campus in downtown Brantford
- A renovated Baseline Transitway Tunnel in Nepean, and
- Improvements to Fort William Stadium in Thunder Bay,

But we're not stopping here, Mr. Speaker.

With our 2011 Budget, we've continued — even strengthened — our commitment to infrastructure by announcing more than \$35 billion in investment over the next three years.

And it's why we're currently developing a long-term infrastructure plan that will build on our record of success.

As we reflect on this record and look ahead, we will explore opportunities for new partnerships and projects ... across a broad range of sectors and communities.

We will continue to find efficiencies and savings ...

And ensure the best value for taxpayer dollars.

As we look towards the release of our own 10-year plan later this spring, I am calling on the federal government to join Ontario and fulfil its commitment to craft a national, long-term capital framework.

Since 2009, the success of the stimulus funding program demonstrates that partnerships among all levels of government have helped Ontario continue to create local jobs and attract international investment.

Addressing our infrastructure challenges demands that we continue to work together.

Because together, I know we can build an Ontario that is stronger and more prosperous than ever.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.