

**OPSEU 2019 submission
to the Standing
Committee on Finance
and Economic Affairs
on Bill 100, An Act to
implement Budget
measures and to enact,
amend and repeal various
statutes**

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Preamble

The budget contained within Bill 100 is not, as the Finance Minister claims, “for the people, by the people.” Instead, it will primarily benefit the wealthiest Ontarians at the expense of the many.

After careful analysis and consultation with the 155,000 frontline public sector workers who are its members, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) has determined there are fundamental flaws with the assumptions and priorities that are the foundation of this budget.

Whether through inexperience or by design, these flaws will have serious negative consequences for the vast majority of Ontarians.

Lacks transparency and accountability

OPSEU is gravely concerned about the lack of transparency and accountability surrounding Bill 100.

Compared to budget bills of the past, Bill 100 contains an alarming lack of specific estimates and projections. This, combined with the government’s decisions to severely limit the number of stakeholders allowed into the “budget lock-up,” and to block ministry officials from providing important details and context during and after the lock-up, lead OPSEU to conclude that the Ford government actively worked to hide substantial cuts contained in the budget.

This is unacceptable. OPSEU demands a different approach from the government on the release of, and communications about, future budget bills.

The debt

From the moment this government was elected, it has stoked false fears about government debt. Doug Ford called the debt “the biggest government scandal in a generation,” and “the worst political cover-up in Ontario’s history.”

Soon after taking office, Ford declared the debt was so scandalous that he hired the firm Ernst & Young to do a “line by line audit” of government spending, despite the fact the province’s Auditor General and Financial Accountability Officer already audit government spending and have a long and credible history of holding government to financial account. Ford also hired former British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell to lead a “Commission of Inquiry” into the previous government’s spending.

As predicted by many, neither the “line by line audit” nor the Commission of Inquiry turned up any cover-up or scandal.

That’s because government debt is not a scandal – it is a totally legitimate and time-honoured tool used by governments around the world and throughout history to invest in people and progress.

Regardless, the Ford Conservatives have continued with their relentless campaign to inflame fears about Ontario’s debt, falsely

conflating it with the perils of personal debt.

“We need to approach Ontario’s finances like the majority of individuals and families approach their household budgets. We must live within our means, pay down our credit cards and spend smarter,” wrote Finance Minister Vic Fedeli in a Toronto Sun column as justification for the deep and damaging cuts contained in the budget:

- \$1 billion less for social services
- \$851 million less for public school teachers
- \$700 million less for training, colleges, and universities
- \$350 million less for the environment
- \$200 million less for public health
- \$130 million less for legal aid

The truth is that government debt is not a credible justification for these spending cuts.

Personal debt is a justifiable concern for many people – the Bank of Canada says the average Canadian owes \$1.70 for every dollar that they earn.

But it is wrong to suggest that government debt is as threatening as personal debt.

Unlike an individual, a government can easily control its revenue through tax rates and resource sales, can command very low interest rates, never faces the prospect of

property seizure over debt, and can finance its debt over many generations.

Ford’s frequent refrain that “Ontario has the largest sub-national debt in the world” is equally misleading.

In most countries around the world, the federal level of government directly funds the most complex and expensive public services: health care, education, and social services. But here in Ontario, the provincial government has that responsibility.

Ontario should therefore be compared to other countries. In that light, our debt burden is relatively low. Our debt-to-GDP ratio – the standard measure of a government’s debt – is close to 40 per cent. Germany’s debt-to-GDP ratio is 60 per cent. Belgium’s is 102 per cent. In the U.S., it’s 105 per cent. In Japan, it’s 200 per cent.

To put it simply, debt is not the problem in Ontario.

Spending

Spending is not the problem in Ontario, either.

As the Financial Accountability Officer (FAO) revealed recently, Ontario invests less in its public services than any other province, and is falling further behind every year.

“At \$9,829, Ontario spends about \$2,000 less per person on provincial programs than the average of other provinces,” wrote the FAO in February 2019. “Since 2011, Ontario

program spending per capita has grown by 0.7 per cent per year on average – or by less than half the pace of growth in the rest of Canada.”

Ontario is now so far behind the other provinces that even the Ontario Chamber of Commerce urged the Ford government not to cut further.

Nevertheless, Ford and Fedeli cut the budgets of almost every single government ministry.

Amid funding cuts, privatization funding boosted

The only ministries that weren't cut are the ministries that the government has flagged for increased privatization.

For example, the Ministry of Infrastructure had its budget increased by 15 per cent. The Ministry of Transportation had its budget increased by nearly 11 per cent. And the Ministry of Health had its budget increased by two per cent.

The implication is clear: the Ford government is intent on funneling more public dollars to private corporations.

The evidence shows that this will only increase the costs of public services while lowering the quality. From the Auditor General's finding that privatized infrastructure has cost citizens \$8 billion more than it should have, to the disastrous privatization of Hydro One, to the ongoing delays and cost overruns with the MetroLinx and Ottawa's P3 transit projects, privatization has failed citizens time and time again.

By boosting funding for privatization, the

Ford government is helping the wealthy few at the expense of the many.

Revenue is the problem

Debt is not the problem. Spending is not the problem.

The problem is revenue.

For generations, the wealthiest people in Ontario have seen their taxes drop significantly.

As the Financial Accountability Officer reported in February, Ontario now collects some of the lowest taxes in the country.

While the average Canadian pays 11.7 per cent of their income to income tax, Ontarians pay just 9.9 per cent.

While corporations pay an average corporate tax of 12.2 per cent across Canada, they pay just 11.8 per cent in Ontario.

Ontario does collect slightly more in sales tax than the Canadian average, but sales tax is a burden disproportionately borne by people with the lowest incomes.

The 2019 budget makes taxes on the wealthy lower still. From a cut to estate taxes that will be of most benefit to the rich, to the \$3.8 billion in corporate and carbon tax cuts, the wealthy are being asked to contribute less.

The government's claim that cutting wealth taxes will benefit all by boosting the economy has been widely debunked.

According to a 2016 study by the Congressional Budget Office in the U.S., corporate tax cuts are among the least

effective ways to boost the economy.

It found that while every dollar in corporate tax cuts increased economic activity by \$1.20, every \$1 in lower- and middle-class tax cuts increased activity by \$1.90, and that every dollar in infrastructure investment increased economic activity by \$2.30.

Similarly, a study of Quebec's universal child care program found that every dollar spent on the program boosted the economy so much that it generated \$1.47 in revenue for government.

If the Ford government were truly committed to boosting the economy for all, it would have focused not on further tax cuts for the wealthy, but on investments in universal public services and publicly owned, financed, and managed infrastructure.

Conclusion

Given the long campaign to stoke fears about government debt, and then the deep spending and tax cuts contained within, it is difficult to see Bill 100 as anything other than an attempt to quietly divert billions of public dollars to the wealthy.

The budget's preoccupation with alcohol, and its minor but deeply flawed nods to progressive programs such as dental care for seniors and tuition cuts, grabbed the early headlines.

But as the consequences of the budget's cuts become more clear, Ontario will realize that it is not, as the Finance Minister claims, "for the people, by the people." It is for the wealthy, by the wealthy.

Consequences of the cuts: (ministry by ministry)

The 2019 budget imposes cuts or opens the door to costly privatization in every government ministry.

How many of these cuts and privatizations will be implemented remains unclear. The budget does not, for the most part, provide in-depth breakdowns of the measures the ministries will be directed or forced to implement.

But despite the lack of transparent disclosure from the government, some of the consequences of these cuts and privatizations are already revealing themselves in painful detail.

The premier has betrayed his repeated campaign pledge that no jobs will be cut.

Job cuts in the form of hiring freezes and direction to leave unfilled positions vacant are common across the Ontario Public Service.

In the Broader Public Service, dozens of autism workers across the province have already been laid off. And many more layoffs are expected in the wake of the billion-dollar cut from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. And every day, more public school teachers announce on social media that they've received redundancy notices.

Fewer frontline workers and more privatization will mean lower quality services for all Ontarians.

In this section, we detail the cuts that individual ministries have already made or are expected to make. There are many.

Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
1,162.0	878.2	-24.42%

The ministry “vision statement” emphasizes rolling back regulations and reducing “red tape,” but contains nothing to explain how the ministry’s 25 per cent cut will be implemented. Possible consequences include:

- Fewer independent and credible food-safety inspections
- Lower investment in support for small and medium-sized farms
- Lower investment in agricultural college and university programs

Attorney General:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
2,088.0	1,933.7	-7.39%

The ministry “vision statement” mentions plans to reduce the use of juries and updating the province’s victim

compensation rules. Since the budget was released, it has been revealed that the budget will also:

- Significantly reduce citizens’ and corporations’ freedom to sue the government
- Cut Legal Aid funding by 30 per cent and forbid the agency from using any provincial funds for refugee and immigration cases
- Significantly cut victim-services funding, including an 80 per cent reduction in the amount victims receive for pain and suffering, from \$25,000 to \$5,000
- Cut the eviction waiting period from 11 to six days, and open the door to privatization of bailiffs enforcing evictions

Children, Community and Social Services:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
17,042.0	16,666.3	-2.2%

The ministry “vision statement” repeats the government’s claim that “the best social program is a job,” and says cuts to social assistance will force more people into the workforce. In its medium-term fiscal outlook, the government notes that this ministry will receive a cut of \$1 billion over the next three years. Those cuts will be

realized through:

- Cutting \$150 million from planned increases to the already poverty-level ODSP and social assistance payments
- Changing the definition of “disability,” potentially making many currently receiving ODSP ineligible to receive it in the future
- Cancelling the province’s basic income pilot in order to cut \$50 million a year
- Forcing all autism service providers, including public hospitals like CHEO, to stop needs-based treatment and adopt a fee-for-service model that will leave many parents unable to afford the treatment their children need. This change will also send more government revenue to the private sector
- Closing the offices of the Ontario Child Advocate and the French Language Services Commissioner, laying off 52 workers and cutting up to \$6 million a year
- Cutting \$15 million from Trillium Foundation, which supports things like recreation programs for children with autism and parenting programs for teenaged mothers

Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
968.0	782.2	-19.19%

The ministry “vision statement” mentions plans to measure outcomes of government-funded business support programs, but provides no details. It also mentions that support for academic and other research institutions, “will be targeted at those organizations that provide benefits for all of the people of Ontario.”

- With a 20 per cent cut, it is possible that business-support programs and research projects will face cuts

Education:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
30,757.0	31,550.3	2.58%

The ministry “vision statement” doesn’t discuss teacher cuts or larger class sizes. Although the Ministry of Education received a small increase this year, there are strong indications that it will face deep cuts in the near future.

These cuts will inevitably force school boards to lay off vital frontline workers, including support staff and educational assistants.

The budget further handcuffs school boards by blocking them from financing needed investments.

On child care, the budget’s tax credit provides much less support than promised, capping out at \$6,000 in a province where child care costs are up to \$20,000 a year.

Government moves outside of the budget make it clear education and child care are

facing significant cuts and privatizations:

- An internal government memo obtained by the Toronto Star outlines the government’s plan to cut \$850 million by reducing the number of teacher jobs by 3,500 over the next three years. Class sizes up to Grade 3 have been capped, but class sizes for all the grades above will rise dramatically. Classes from Grades 4 to 8 will be increased by one and high school classes will be increased by an average of six
- Removing the “For Profit Maximum Threshold,” which had limited the amount of government funding private child care providers could receive, opens the door for more government revenue going into private sector hands
- Cancelling a \$50 million fund to help child care centres cover labour costs will make child care even more unaffordable for many

Energy, Northern Development and Mines:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
5,751	5,185.2	-9.84%

The ministry “vision statement” says government will centralize conservation programs and focus on a “higher return on investment.” It mentions little about Northern Development, other than assurance that its pro-business policies will increase development in the North. Though

not necessarily related specifically to the budget, various government moves could put more financial pressure on the ministry, including:

- Cancelling the Hydro One rate protection plan for 325,000 Ontarians

Environment, Conservation and Parks:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
983	631.2	-35.79%

The ministry “vision statement” says cancelling Ontario’s cap-and-trade program accounts for the ministry’s massive 35 per cent cut. Other than promises to encourage the reduction of waste and litter, the budget contains no plan to tackle climate change. The budget:

- Cancels cap and trade will cost government at least \$3.6 billion in revenue
- Cancels the electric vehicle rebate program, which helped more than double sales when it was introduced in 2016
- Before the budget was tabled, government eliminated the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario

Finance:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
1,608	1,463.3	-9.0%

The ministry “vision statement” says the ministry will refocus spending on unspecified higher-priority items, reducing the debt, and making the tax system “efficient and competitive.”

Francophone Affairs:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
6	5.8	-3.3%

The ministry “vision statement” says it will reduce administrative inefficiencies.

- Closing the offices of the French Language Services Commissioner and the Ontario Child Advocate, laying off 52 workers and cutting up to \$6 million a year

Government and Consumer Services:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
714.0	666.5	-6.65%

The ministry “vision statement” emphasizes a “digital first” approach. It also

promises procurement centralization in the Ontario Public Service and the Broader Public Services.

- Providing services online makes sense, but saving money by cutting and privatizing ServiceOntario frontline workers will make it harder for citizens to get the quality services they need, and will send government revenue to private corporations.

Health and Long-Term Care:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
62,158	63,510	2.18%

The ministry “vision statement” mentions new hospitals and hospital upgrades, a dental plan for low-income seniors, and the move to make people with private health insurance ineligible for OHIP+. The ministry’s small budget increase barely keeps pace with general inflation and is far behind the “health care” inflation rate of 5.2 per cent.

Not mentioned are the massive structural changes taking place, replacing Local Health Integration Networks with a health “superagency” that opens the door to more privatization. When the Harris government forced massive structural changes to the health system, it ended up costing up to \$3.9 billion in order to realize \$800 million in savings. We have yet to be told what this new round of restructuring will cost.

It must also be noted that the government’s

preoccupation with alcohol – allowing alcohol sales in corner and box stores and generally more alcohol use with “tailgate parties,” “buck-a-beer,” and extended sales hours – will have significant consequences for the Ministry of Health. Alcohol use already costs the Ontario economy more than \$15 billion in extra health care and lost productivity. Evidence clearly shows that increasing alcohol availability increases those public costs.

The budget’s small investment in health care is clearly far short of what’s actually required, which helps explain this long list of destructive cuts and the fact that the door seems to be being opened to more privatization:

- Cutting OHIP-funded services by at least \$500 million, including pain management medications, diabetes management, and psychotherapy will leave many without the care they need and move us further towards a two-tier health system
- Cancelling OHIP+, which provided drug coverage to people younger than 25, for people who have private insurance will move us further towards a two-tier health system
- Revoking nearly \$1 million in funding to the College of Midwives of Ontario will put heavy financial pressure on midwives – who deliver 15 per cent of babies in the province
- Drastically cutting funding increases to rape crisis centres – from nearly \$15 million to just \$1 million – will leave

victims of abuse and their families even more vulnerable

- Closing nearly a third of the province’s overdose prevention sites – from 21 to 15 – will help fuel the opioid crisis which, in 2017, killed more than 1,200 Ontarians
- Cuts to and restructuring of Paramedic services – from 59 to 10 – and ambulance communications centres – from 22 to 10 – opens the door to privatization, lower quality care, and higher costs
- Cutting funding to Public Health – by up to \$1 billion over 10 years for Toronto alone -- and cutting the number of Public Health Boards from 35 to 10, will leave people across the province less healthy and more vulnerable to unsafe drinking water and deadly communicable diseases like Meningitis

Indigenous Affairs:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
146	74.4	-49.04%

The ministry “vision statement” says its priority is encouraging economic opportunities. Meaningful reconciliation is clearly not a priority. The budget:

- Cuts the ministry’s base funding from \$81 million to \$74 million
- Totally defunds of the \$2.5 million Indigenous Culture Fund

- Allots nothing for land-claim settlements; \$65 million was spent on land claims in 2018/19
- Fuels rumours that Indigenous friendship centres will also face cuts

Infrastructure:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
453	523.8	15.63%

The ministry “vision statement” outlines no concrete plans. But it’s worth noting that this ministry oversees many large and lucrative privatization projects, and is one of the few ministries that sees a significant budget boost.

- In 2015, the Auditor General looked back at 10 years of privatized infrastructure projects and found that citizens had overpaid for them by more than \$8 billion.

Labour:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
319	306.1	-4.04%

Read between the lines of the ministry “vision statement,” and it’s clear this government puts employers far ahead of frontline workers by allowing employers to educate themselves about their obligations under the Employment

Standards Act (ESA) through digital tools and by “streamlining” enforcement. The government’s earlier changes to the ESA under Bill 66 had already significantly reduced employer obligations and responsibilities.

The budget also lays the groundwork for stripping workers of their Charter right to choose their own union, and also to free and fair collective bargaining. Its provisions under Schedule 53 for repealing important parts of the Public Service Labour Relations Transition Act (PSLRTA) will strip workers of their right to choose a union in cases of service transfer. This legislation was introduced in the 1990s, and has ensured labour stability during integrations. Bargaining agents understand the PSLRTA process, and it offers predictability in labour relations. PSLRTA should continue to govern all public sector integrations.

And its provisions to allow government to unilaterally change the wages and conditions of frontline post-secondary workers who have retired strips their right to free and fair collective bargaining.

Between the budget and the ESA, the government is making workers more vulnerable to exploitation, injury, and death by:

- Instructing ministry staff not to initiate any new proactive inspections for wage theft and other ESA violations
- Deferring inspection and prosecution training for ministry staff
- Removing two paid sick days from the ESA

- Rolling back the planned minimum wage increase to \$15 an hour
- Scaling back the ratio of journeymen to apprentices to 1:1 from the safer and more educational 2:1 or 3:1 (depending on the particular trade)
- Cutting employer premiums to the Worker Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) by 30 per cent

Municipal Affairs and Housing:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
1,484	1,117	-24.69%

The ministry “vision statement” says the province will force municipalities to “modernize” and work more efficiently.

- The province’s move to cut the number of Toronto City Councillors from 47 to 25 actually increased the council’s costs from \$10.6 million to \$12 million
- The elimination of rent control on new units will make housing even more unaffordable
- Cutting the eviction waiting period from 11 to six days will leave tenants more vulnerable to exploitation
- Creating a new tribunal to approve new development will take control away from municipal councils

Natural Resources and Forestry:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
834	672.3	-19.39%

The ministry “vision statement” focuses on speeding up the development of Ontario’s natural resources and forestry sectors. Conservation and environmental protection aren’t priorities as the government has eliminated the office of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario.

Seniors and Accessibility:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
59	51.1	-13.39%

The ministry “vision statement” offers few details, but suggests savings through “back-office efficiencies, inter-office savings, and directing certain advertising campaigns to cheaper online methods.”

- Providing services online makes sense, but saving money by cutting and privatizing frontline workers will make it harder for citizens to get the quality services they need and will send government revenue to private corporations.

Solicitor General:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
2,907	2965.1	2.0%

The ministry “vision statement” has very little detail. Other parts of the budget indicate that the ministry’s budget increase is going towards policing services.

- Nothing in the budget to address the ongoing Crisis in Corrections

Tourism, Culture and Sport:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
1,552	1493.4	-3.78%

The ministry “vision statement” says government plans to review and “modernize” granting programs, but this is clearly just code for cuts. The budget:

- Cuts funding for libraries in half
- Cuts the budget of Ontario Arts Council by \$5 million
- Cuts the entire \$2.5 million Indigenous Culture Fund
- Cuts Canadian Music Association Grant program in half, from \$15 million to \$7 million

Training, Colleges and Universities:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
12,108.0	11,370.8	-6.09%

The ministry “vision statement” focuses on aligning post-secondary education with labour-market needs. In reality, the government is seriously cutting and weakening post-secondary education in the province by:

- Forcing colleges and universities to cut tuition by 10 per cent without any boost in funding, costing colleges \$80 million and universities \$360 million. This will force frontline workers to bear an increased workload as unfilled positions won’t be filled
- Eliminating free tuition for low-income students
- Eliminating the six-month grace period before students need to begin paying back their Ontario student loans
- Tying a significant portion of college and university funding to an as-yet undisclosed set of “performance” measures. Based on the government’s rhetoric, it seems safe to assume these measures will put a low priority on affordability, education, and inclusion
- Making student fees for campus groups optional. Since campus groups often hire support workers with those fees,

this will put even more pressure on frontline workers

- Closing the Ontario College of Trades, along with cuts to the required ratios between journeymen and apprentices, will leave trades people less safe and more vulnerable to exploitation
- Cancelling the College Task Force ordered by an arbitrator, which will cost tens if not hundreds of thousands of dollars in needless legal fees in the face of OPSEU’s Charter challenge
- Cancelling plans for Ontario’s first Francophone University and funding for three other campuses in the GTA will leave our post-secondary system overburdened
- Schedule 39 of Bill 100 contains the government’s attempt to give itself the ability to unilaterally change the bargained wages and working conditions of frontline post-secondary workers who have retired

Transportation:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
4,676	5,187	10.94%

The ministry “vision statement” discusses “forging new partnerships,” which is code for more privatization. It’s worth noting that, like the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Transportation oversees many large and lucrative privatization projects,

and is one of the few ministries that sees a significant budget boost.

- In 2015, the Auditor General looked back at 10 years of privatized infrastructure projects and found that citizens had overpaid for them by more than \$8 billion
- The move to “upload” the Toronto Transit Commission reduces accountability and, since it will likely involve privatization, will also lead to decreased quality and increased costs
- The proposal to increase speed limits on the 400 highways will increase accidents and fuel consumption

Treasury Board Secretariat:

Interim 2018-19 (\$ in Millions)	Plan 2019 (\$ in Millions)	% Change
1,770	2,738.9	54.74%

The ministry “vision statement” emphasizes enforcing fiscal responsibility across government with a strengthened audit function. The main increase to this ministry is from the Operating Contingency Fund and the Capital Contingency Fund, which might be the source of payments for needless expenses like:

- Up to \$1 billion to break the agreement with the Beer Store in order to allow alcohol in corner and box stores
- More than \$103 million US in penalties after Hydro One’s bid to buy a U.S. power company failed over the

government's meddling in the Hydro One board

- The roughly \$10 million it cost to force the retirement of former Hydro One CEO Mayo Schmidt

Recommendations and conclusion

The scale and scope of the damaging cuts in this budget mean that specific recommendations about Bill 100 are difficult to make. The bill is focused on the fundamentally flawed assumption that Ontario's debt has reached dangerous levels. It has not.

OPSEU's first and most important recommendation, therefore, is to table a substantially revised budget bill that focusses not on the debt but on the real problem Ontario faces: too little revenue that has left the province dead last in terms of public service investment.

The province needs more revenue in order to invest in itself and its future.

A budget built on that foundation will eliminate the need for deep and damaging cuts.

Instead, it will give government the foundation and confidence it needs to enact the following recommendations that will be of benefit to all Ontarians:

- Increase the budgets of each ministry by at least 2.7 per cent, the latest available Ontario inflation rate
- Call a moratorium on privatization, and establish a timeline for the review of all currently privatized public services
- Abandon the scheme to allow corner and box stores to sell alcohol
- Abandon the changes to the Public Service Labour Relations Transition Act
- Abandon the changes that would reduce citizens' and corporations' freedom to sue the government
- Immediately reinstate planned increases to ODSP and social assistance payments
- Abandon the review of the definition of "disability"
- Abandon the move to force all autism service providers to adopt a fee-for-service model and establish a timeline for expanding needs-based services like those provided successfully by CHEO
- Re-establish the offices of the Ontario Child Advocate
- Abandon any plans to cut the Ministry of Education in the future, which would lead to layoffs of support staff, educational assistants, and up to 3,500 teachers
- Re-establish the "For Profit Maximum Threshold" for private child care providers, and the \$50 million fund to help child care providers cover labour costs

- Re-establish the office of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario
- Swiftly table a plan to meaningfully address climate change
- Re-establish the electric vehicle rebate program
- Re-establish the French Languages Services Commission
- Re-establish plans to open a Francophone University
- Adopt a “digital first” approach that is centred on publicly owned and managed ServiceOntarios that are properly staffed
- Increase investment in health and long-term care by the “health care” inflation rate of 5.2 per cent
- Abandon plans to restructure health care under a “super agency,” and strengthen the transparency and accountability of the Local Health Integration Networks
- Abandon plans to make people with private insurance ineligible for OHIP+
- Restore funding to the College of Midwives of Ontario
- Restore funding to rape crisis centres
- Abandon plans to close overdose prevention sites
- Abandon plans to restructure and privatize Paramedic and ambulance communications services
- Restore funding to Public Health
- Restore funding to the Indigenous Culture Fund
- Restore the Employment Standards Act to its state under Bill 148
- Establish fair rent control on all rental housing
- Make meaningful investment in the Ministry of the Solicitor General to address the Crisis in Corrections
- Restore funding to libraries, the Ontario Arts council and the Canadian Music Association Grant
- Provide colleges and universities with the funding they need to accommodate a 10 per cent tuition cut
- Restore free tuition for low-income students
- Restore the six-month grace period before students must begin paying back Ontario student loans
- Abandon plans to tie college and university funding to profit-focused measures
- Restore the Ontario College of Trades and restore the ratios between journeymen and apprentices
- Restore the College Task Force
- Abandon plans to unilaterally change the wages and conditions of retired frontline post-secondary workers
- Abandon plans to “upload” the Toronto Transit Commission

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