

CHRISTINE'S CHRONICLES: A Plan for the People

By Christine Elliott, MPP
Newmarket-Aurora

November has been an exciting and busy month. As the MPP for Newmarket and Aurora, I had the pleasure of meeting with groups such as Children's Treatment Network, Rose of Sharon, Kinark, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, the Margaret Bahen Hospice, and attended the Remembrance Day dinner at the Aurora Legion. I am also happy to highlight one of the local artists on display in our office this month, Linda Welch, an award-winning photographer from Newmarket!

To commemorate our veterans, I was honoured to take part in the Royal Canadian Legion Newmarket Veterans Association's Annual Remembrance Day Parade. It was an incredible event and a great opportunity that allowed me to directly thank some of the heroes who protected our country and kept us safe. I also had the pleasure of taking part in the Newmarket Santa Claus Parade to spread some holiday cheer.

Since writing to you last, our government has taken concrete action to support businesses in our province and make sure Ontario is Open for Business. We've taken immediate action by repealing Bill 148 and introducing the Making Ontario Open for Business Act. Bill 148 imposed unnecessary costs on businesses and was too much too soon for Ontario job creators. The concrete measures we have taken will help create and protect jobs in the province by reducing the regulatory burden.

I had the pleasure of meeting with many local constituents, groups and businesses this past month to discuss what our government is doing to support our communities. I held a small business roundtable to share how our government is delivering on our promise to create jobs and create a better environment for businesses grow. It was an excellent and productive discussion. I am proud of the measures our government has taken to create jobs and ensure Ontario is open for business.

?Roundtable opportunities with political leaders provide great opportunities for the small businesses voices to be heard? ?James Daigle, Treefrog Inc.

Last week, our government released our fall fiscal update on the state of the province ? the 2018 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review. It's a plan to address Ontario's fiscal challenges, while making life more affordable for everyone across the province. We will restore fiscal balance, reduce debt, and strengthen accountability and transparency measures. Highlights include:

Saving \$3.2 billion in program expenses by finding efficiencies ? without a single job cut, tax hike or reduction in front-line services.

Introducing one of the most generous tax cuts for low-income workers in a generation

Taking steps to expand the supply of homes and rental properties by developing a new Housing Supply Action Plan

Reducing red tape by 25 per cent by 2022 to help lower costs and make it easier to start and grow a business.

As the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, we have also taken meaningful steps towards reducing wait times, ending hallway healthcare and building a comprehensive addictions and mental health strategy. We are:

Making a historic investment of \$1.9 billion in mental health and addictions services, matching the federal government's commitment. The funding will also provide faster access to specialized care for patients by investing in more addictions services and beds through new or expanded Rapid Access Addiction Medicine clinics, as well as address specific service gaps for Indigenous peoples, children and youth.

We're building an additional 1,100 beds and spaces in hospitals and communities, including over 640 new beds to prepare for the flu season.

To end hallway health care, we are creating 6,000 new long-term care beds ? the first wave of more than 15,000 beds to be built over the next five years.

I am proud of these accomplishments but there is still a lot of work to be done. Our government is working hard to address the challenges facing our province and our health care system. We will continue to listen to the people who plan and work on the front lines of our health care system. Together, we will create a health care system that works for the people of Ontario.

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