

Attention News Editors:

Premier McGuinty Fine Tunes His Cabinet At Mid-Term

Plan To Strengthen Education, Health And Prosperity Of Ontarians
Reflected In New Responsibilities

QUEEN'S PARK, ON, June 29 /CNW/ - Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty has enhanced his Cabinet as the government further strengthens the education, health and prosperity of Ontario's people.

"We have made real progress for families and businesses as we approach the midway point of our mandate," Premier McGuinty said today.

"Today, we take the next step by improving Cabinet's structure so we can do even more to help Ontarians meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of the 21st century."

Each of the changes announced today reflects the Premier's values and his government's plan for Ontario.

Building the best-educated, healthiest and most highly skilled workforce will continue to strengthen Ontario in an era of global competition. With class sizes getting smaller and test scores for reading, writing and math going up, Gerard Kennedy will continue to build on this success as Minister of Education.

Ontario is committed to lifelong learning, which begins with ensuring our children get the best start in life. Mary Anne Chambers assumes responsibility for Children and Youth Services.

The centrepiece of the successful spring budget is "Reaching Higher", the McGuinty Plan to improve the quality, accessibility and accountability of our universities, colleges and training programs, by investing \$6.2 billion over the next five years. Chris Bentley will implement that plan as the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Our greatest asset is our people because, in the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century, the most valuable commodity is a new idea - one that creates investment and jobs.

In addition to serving as President of the Executive Council, Premier McGuinty will lead the newly created Ministry of Research and Innovation, which signals the importance the government puts on ensuring Ontario is competing and winning in the marketplace of ideas.

In health care, we are making real progress in shortening wait times for important medical procedures and improving families' access to doctors and other health professionals through family health teams. George Smitherman will continue to build on this foundation as the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

At the same time, the government is doing more to keep people healthy. Jim Watson becomes Minister of Health Promotion, marking the first time Ontario has dedicated a portfolio to promoting healthy living and illness prevention.

Health is a core priority for the government. Cleaning up the air we breathe and protecting the water we drink is critical to our people's health. Laurel Broten joins Cabinet as Minister of the Environment.

Government must improve its own services to the public while living within its means. With that goal in mind, Gerry Phillips heads the new Ministry of Government Services, which combines elements of the former Management Board Secretariat and the former Ministry of Consumer and Business Services. His responsibilities include modernizing front-line services through Service Ontario, ensuring Ontarians can access those services through a "single window" (instead of having to know which ministry is responsible), human resources management and improving internal government operations in order to meet the government's target of \$750 million in savings.

The 2005 Budget, which features strategic investments in health, education and prosperity, while reporting that the deficit has been cut in half, is one of the most well-received in the province's history. Greg Sorbara will continue to build on this success as Finance Minister.

Joe Cordiano has championed the renaissance of Ontario's critically important auto sector, attracting billions of dollars in new investment from the world's major automakers and the thousands of jobs that come with that investment. As Minister of Economic Development and Trade, he will work to secure new opportunities in other key sectors, including biotech, to seek trade with and investment in the world's emerging economies, such as China and India, and to develop a new branding and marketing strategy for Ontario. He will also be responsible for business registration and consumer protection.

Ontario's diversity is a tremendous source of strength. Our people speak every language and understand every culture, enriching our society and positioning us to seize trade opportunities in the world's fastest-growing economies.

David Caplan, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal and Deputy House Leader, is responsible for implementing the government's five-year infrastructure plan through a new and enhanced agency. He also takes on the job of managing government assets, which includes responsibility for the Ontario Realty Corporation, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.

Mike Colle enters Cabinet to lead the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. His job is to ensure Ontario leads the international competition for the world's best and brightest knowledge workers and does all it can to settle new Canadians and integrate them into Ontario's society and economy. The ministry now assumes responsibilities for English-as-a-Second-Language training for adults and bridge training for internationally trained professionals and tradespeople.

Our seniors, who have done so much to build this province, deserve high-quality public services, even though demands for those services are expected to grow as our population ages. Jim Bradley, who remains Minister of Tourism, also takes on responsibility for Seniors.

As Attorney General, Michael Bryant is charged with the responsibility of strengthening the justice sector by ensuring it's tough and fair and holds people responsible for their actions while focusing on prevention. He will work with Monte Kwinter, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, to ensure the sector is modern, efficient and effective. Kwinter is also responsible for the commitment to deliver 1,000 new police officers.

Ontario is the heart of Canada, and Canada works best when Ontario is strong and its relationship with the federal government and other provinces and territories is strong. While the Premier remains committed to this work and the campaign to narrow the \$23-billion gap, his term as chair of the Council of the Federation is coming to an end this summer. He is relinquishing the Intergovernmental Affairs portfolio to Marie Bountrogianni, who also assumes responsibility for the Democratic Renewal Secretariat at an important time when Ontario is about to consider electoral reform.

Ontario's farmers rank amongst the very best in the world. But international circumstances beyond their control, from BSE to falling commodity prices, present a significant challenge to our farmers and our rural communities. The government has responded to these challenges and now prepares to work with farmers and rural Ontario to modernize the industry. Leona Dombrowsky heads the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, which is now being added to the powerful Priorities and Planning Committee of Cabinet, fulfilling a campaign commitment to make Agriculture a lead ministry.

During the first half of its mandate, the government has improved assistance for those who rely on Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support programs, while building stronger supports for victims of domestic violence and cracking down on deadbeat parents. Sandra Pupatello will continue to build on this success as Minister of Community and Social Services and Minister

Responsible for Women's Issues, while also assuming responsibility for Ontarians with disabilities, including the implementation of the new Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

The government is proud of the progress it has made in restoring a balanced approach to labour relations in Ontario. As Minister of Labour, Steve Peters will build on this progress and lead the passage and implementation of legislation to end mandatory retirement.

Resource development that respects our environment and our cultural heritage is critical to the province's growth: David Ramsay takes on the Ontario Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat in addition to his Natural Resources portfolio.

Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Northern Development and Mines, will continue to implement the key elements of our Northern Prosperity Plan, including a revamped Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation, Northern Ontario Grow Bonds and the GO North program.

Dwight Duncan, Minister of Energy, House Leader, and Chair of Cabinet will continue to modernize the energy sector by implementing a responsible plan to replace coal, introduce smart meters, attract a viable renewables industry and foster a culture of conservation in Ontario.

Harinder Takhar, who was instrumental along with Minister Gerretsen in the delivery of gas tax dollars for public transit, remains Minister of Transportation, responsible for highway and transit improvements and development of a Greater Toronto Transportation Authority.

Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Culture and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs, who has strengthened the Ontario Heritage Act and attracted massive new investment through an enhanced film and television tax credit, will continue to work with the sector to develop Ontario's entertainment and creativity cluster.

John Gerretsen, who led the creation of the Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt as the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, will continue to work with municipal leaders across Ontario, reform the Ontario Municipal Board and develop a new City of Toronto Act.

The number of ministers in the Executive Council increases by two for a total of 25.

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THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF ONTARIO

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty	Premier and President of the Council Minister of Research and Innovation
James Bradley	Minister of Tourism Minister Responsible for Seniors
Monte Kwinter	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services
David James Ramsay	Minister of Natural Resources Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs
Gregory Sorbara	Minister of Finance

	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet
Gerry Phillips	Minister of Government Services
Joseph Cordiano	Minister of Economic Development and Trade
Rick Bartolucci	Minister of Northern Development and Mines
Dwight Douglas Duncan	Minister of Energy Chair of Cabinet Government House Leader
John Philip Gerretsen	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Gerard Kennedy	Minister of Education
Sandra Pupatello	Minister of Community and Social Services Minister Responsible for Women's Issues
David Caplan	Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal Deputy Government House Leader
Dr. Marie Bountrogianni	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal
Michael J. Bryant	Attorney General
Leona Dombrowsky	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Steve Peters	Minister of Labour
George Smitherman	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Christopher Bentley	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities
Mary Anne V. Chambers	Minister of Children and Youth Services
Madeleine Meilleur	Minister of Culture Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs
Harinder Jeet Singh Takhar	Minister of Transportation
Jim Watson	Minister of Health Promotion
Mike Colle	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
Laurel C. Broten	Minister of the Environment
Anthony Alexander Dean	Secretary of the Cabinet and Clerk of the Executive Council

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