

Ontario Modernizing Rules and Reducing Burdens to Stimulate Economic Growth

April 15, 2021

Ontario's Spring 2021 Red Tape Reduction Package is the next step in our plan to ease unnecessary burdens and help stimulate economic growth. As part of the package, Ontario introduced the *Supporting Recovery and Competitiveness Act* and regulatory changes to modernize rules and accelerate business growth to attract investment and create jobs. The package would benefit individuals, families and businesses by introducing measures that would create the conditions for investment and prosperity over the long term, while enhancing policies that protect our environment and keep us safe and healthy.

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Make the Tribunal's Rules of Procedure easier to understand

The Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Appeal Tribunal has updated its Rules of Procedure to make them easier for parties to understand and follow. Simplified Rules of Procedure help to better meet the needs of stakeholders who appear before the Tribunal. This effort aligns with the Ontario government's broader effort to reduce red tape across the board.

Reduce burden and streamline drainage approvals for farmers, farm businesses and municipalities

As part of its plan to create a more competitive business environment, Ontario proposes to proclaim amendments to the *Drainage Act* made by the *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act* that would enable a new regulation. This would reduce burden and streamline drainage project approvals for farmers, farm businesses and municipalities. These improvements would save time, money, and enhance sector competitiveness — while maintaining the rules that help keep Ontarians and our environment safe and healthy.

Support on-farm anaerobic digestion

Ontario is seeking to reduce red tape, provide economic solutions for producing renewable natural gas and protect the environment by encouraging the recycling of nutrients and reducing greenhouse gases. Proposing to remove barriers to enable new systems to be approved more easily and with less cost would help ensure that Ontario continues to be a Canadian leader in the biogas sector.

Allow farmers to adopt more efficient on-farm bulk storage options for milk

As part of the Ontario government's Open for Business Action Plan, Ontario is considering potential changes to a regulation made by the Farm Products Marketing Commission to support the economic success of the dairy industry and reduce regulatory burden, while continuing to protect food safety.

Eliminate licencing fees of \$50 or less

As part of its plan to create a more competitive business environment, the government is proposing changes to the *Agricultural Tile Drainage Installation Act* (ATDIA) to remove licensing and

administrative fees of \$50 or less for drainage businesses and operators. This would save them money and enhance market competitiveness while maintaining the rules that protect Ontarians and our environment.

Ministry of the Attorney General

Permit Law Society to nominate paralegals to the Justices of the Peace Review Council

The Justices of the Peace Review Council (JPRC) receives and investigates complaints made by members of the public about the conduct of justices of the peace in Ontario. Currently, the JPRC consists of judges, justices of the peace, four representatives appointed by the Attorney General, and a lawyer appointed by the Attorney General from a list of three names submitted by the Law Society of Ontario. The proposed change to the *Justices of the Peace Act* would allow the Law Society of Ontario to nominate paralegals for appointment to the Justices of the Peace Review Council.

Reduce burden and increase flexibility for businesses

Ontario's Spring 2021 Red Tape Reduction Package will reduce burden and increase flexibility for businesses in Ontario's alcohol manufacturing and hospitality sectors, while making it easier for both businesses and consumers to understand the rules. After beginning efforts to modernize the legal framework for the sale, service and delivery of alcohol in December 2019, these changes would fulfil the government's commitment to increase choice, convenience and fairness for alcohol consumers and create more opportunities for businesses to expand and grow. Changes proposed would also more closely align alcohol regulation with cannabis and gaming. Proposed changes to the *Liquor Licence Control Act, 2019* included in the *Supporting Recovery and Competitiveness Act* would make technical changes required before the new framework comes into effect, which is anticipated to be in the fall of 2021.

Support efficient and effective regulation for Ontario's lawyers and paralegals

The government is proposing changes to the *Law Society Act* that would allow the Law Society to revoke the licence of a lawyer or paralegal if they have been suspended for over two years. If passed, this change will support the efficient and effective regulation of lawyers and paralegals, and will help protect the integrity of legal representation in Ontario.

Support efficiency and fairness in Ontario's class action laws

The government is proposing minor changes to the *Class Proceedings Act, 1992* to clarify when dormant class proceedings would be dismissed due to delay. This would support efficiency and address backlogs in Ontario's courts.

Prohibit unauthorized tribunal recordings

The Ontario government is proposing amendments to the *Statutory Powers Procedure Act* (SPPA) to prohibit any person from recording an in-person or virtual tribunal hearing, and/or publishing or broadcasting a recording of an in-person or virtual tribunal hearing, without approval from the tribunal. This is being proposed to extend similar protections currently available in court proceedings to participants in tribunal hearings. The changes would protect the privacy of those before the tribunal, give participants the ability to consent to cooperate with media and others who publicize the hearings, and help alleviate stress for witnesses and participants.

Align nomination and candidate registration requirements

These technical housekeeping amendments would align current requirements for nomination and candidate registration in the *Election Act* with election finance requirements under the proposed *Protecting Ontario Elections Act*. Proposed amendments would specifically require nomination contestants and candidates to submit at registration the names of people authorized to accept contributions, the name and address of every financial institution legally allowed to accept deposits to be used by or on behalf of a prospective candidate and the names of individuals who can deposit or withdraw money from each financial institution. As a result of the proposed amendments, nomination contestants and candidates would no longer be required to submit the name of an auditor at registration.

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Modernize Ontario's *Family Responsibility and Support Arrears Enforcement Act, 1996*

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services' Family Responsibility Office (FRO) is responsible for collecting and disbursing child and spousal support for court orders and domestic contracts in Ontario. The government is proposing four legislative amendments to the *Family Responsibility and Support Arrears Enforcement Act, 1996* (FRSAEA) to help drive efficiencies and streamline processes. The proposed changes demonstrate Ontario's continued commitment to improving the lives of families and children by ensuring that FRO's governing legislation keeps pace with legislative changes in other jurisdictions, including recent improvements in the family law system by both the federal and provincial governments.

Enable a new vision for Ontario's social services system

The government is working with municipal partners and other stakeholders to modernize our social assistance system and connect people to the supports they need to achieve greater independence and employment. As part of Ontario's social assistance recovery and renewal plan, on February 11, 2021, the province announced a new vision for Ontario's social services system. The first phase of realizing this vision will be realigning functions between municipalities, District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) and the Ontario government. This realignment aims to reduce administrative burden for municipalities and DSSABs as the province takes on more administrative functions (e.g., social assistance applications and payments) and the municipalities can focus more on the role of connecting people with the right supports to stabilize lives and get people back to work. The proposed amendments to the *Ontario Works Act, 1997* will enable this realignment of roles.

Ministry of Colleges and Universities

Establish Northern Ontario School of Medicine and Université de Hearst as independent, publicly-assisted universities with degree-granting authority

The Ontario government is committed to providing high-quality postsecondary education in Northern Ontario and recognizes that our northern institutions play an important role in ensuring we have a skilled workforce. By introducing legislation to establish the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) and Université de Hearst (Hearst) as two independent universities with degree-granting authority, Ontario is providing more opportunities for students to access medical education and French-language studies in Northern Ontario.

Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

Enhance burden reduction in Ontario by amending the *Modernizing Ontario for People and Businesses Act, 2020*

The *Modernizing Ontario for People and Businesses Act* (MOPBA) is the government's new burden reduction legislation that creates obligations for every Ontario ministry to follow when creating new legislation, regulations, policies and forms. The government is proposing legislative changes to MOPBA to make sure ministries are able to meet existing and eventually new burden reduction targets. Prioritizing burden reduction makes it easier for businesses to succeed and helps Ontario become more competitive.

Ministry of Education

Allow schools and school boards to submit student volunteer hours reports online

Every student must complete community involvement activities as part of the requirements for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). The required minimum number of hours is 40, but this was reduced to 20 hours for students graduating in the 2020-21 school year, because of COVID-19. Included in the policy is the requirement for school boards to develop paper-based forms in which students list their planned and completed activities, for principals to receive these forms, and for students to complete a notification form and a notice of completion form with their signature, along with that of their parental and volunteer sponsor. The government is removing the requirement for students to complete and submit paper-based forms. This will allow schools and boards to develop their own processes, including electronic processes for students to report completed hours. This change has been in effect since October 2020 as a temporary measure due to COVID-19 and will be a permanent change going forward.

Discontinue option sheet and course calendar data collecting that the government doesn't use

The Ontario government has collected course calendar and student option sheet related data from boards through the Ontario School Information System (OnSIS) since 2007. However, the government has not reported on the course calendar or option sheet data in the over 10 years that it has been collected due to redundancies and data-quality issues. Given that the government does not currently use this data, Ontario is eliminating the collection to reduce the reporting burden on boards, which will have very limited impact.

Amend Centre Jules-Léger Consortium meeting requirements

The Ontario government is proposing amendments to the *Education Act* and to move the authority to prescribe meeting requirements for the Centre Jules-Léger Consortium (CJLC) members to a new Lieutenant Governor in Council (LGIC) regulation. If approved, Ontario will propose a new regulation addressing CJLC meeting rules in-person and electronic meeting rules in order, for instance, to permit them to be modified to account for the COVID-19 pandemic and align them more closely with those applicable to district school boards.

Discontinue annual Ontario Universities' Application Centre and the Ontario College Application Service data acquisition collecting that the government no longer needs

The Ontario government has had data sharing agreements with the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) and the Ontario College Application Service (OCAS) since 2007-08. These agreements set out the terms for OUAC and OCAS to provide individual-level data on students who have applied to and/or registered in Ontario colleges/universities. Ontario is proposing to

discontinue the annual acquisition of applicant and registrant data from the OUAC and OCAS to reduce burden as these agreements are no longer necessary.

Remove a regulatory burden for First Nation schools

Under the Reciprocal Education Approach (REA), First Nation schools must submit certain documentation to the Ministry of Education by October 30 of a given school year in order to be eligible for funding under the REA. The Ontario government is proposing amendments to waive the requirement for First Nation schools listed on Table 2 of s. 3 of the REA regulation to submit documentation to the ministry demonstrating school eligibility.

Remove the mandatory residence requirements in English and French-language demonstration schools

Ontario is proposing amendments to the *Education Act* that would remove the requirement for a residential setting for demonstration schools (i.e., removing the requirement for a student to sleep over at the school residence during the week). This change provides more choice to students and families when considering attendance at a demonstration school.

Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines

Help consumers save money on electricity by making it easier for them to track their energy use

The government is proposing that natural gas and electricity utilities be required to implement the Green Button – Connect My Data standard that will enable applications to offer residential and business consumers comprehensive analysis of their own energy consumption data. This initiative would provide consumers with more options to better understand their individual energy usage to help find easy and affordable ways to lower their monthly electricity bills.

Streamline energy generation grid connections

The government is proposing to streamline requirements related to electricity grid connections to ensure a level playing field for all generator types. Future capacity planning for Ontario's energy system as managed by the Independent Electricity System Operator will be done in a manner that offers value to ratepayers by allowing any resource that can meet system needs to compete.

Streamline approvals and reduce regulatory duplication for electricity transmission projects

The government is proposing legislative amendments to exempt all transmission projects from the *Planning Act, 1990* if the project is also required to complete an environmental assessment. Currently, Hydro One is the only transmitter that benefits from this exemption. This amendment would streamline approvals, reduce regulatory duplication and support fair competitive transmission procurement processes.

Streamline energy considerations in the Leave to Construct process

The government is proposing to streamline requirements for the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) when assessing Leave to Construct applications. These changes would enable the OEB's Leave to Construct hearings to focus on price, reliability and quality of service for customers.

Establish a public registry for licences of occupation administered under the *Mining Act*

The government is proposing to establish a new public registry for licences of occupation administered under the *Mining Act*, similar to the public registry that hosts mining claims information for the province. By maintaining the proposed new registry, businesses and the public will be able

to skip having to request information from the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines and would be able to access it directly online. Improving transparency, efficiency and public access to information aligns with the goals of Ontario's Open Data and Digital First Strategy.

Better align the French and English versions of the *Mining Act*

The government is proposing to align the French version of the *Mining Act* with the English version to provide businesses with more clarity and certainty in the interpretation and application of the legislation.

Reduce paper-based mining land forms for a more efficient, modern and competitive business environment

The government has reduced the number of paper-based forms by migrating existing forms online. Ontario's Forms Repository had several standalone forms related to mining lands. Ontario was able to eliminate some paper-based forms when the Mining Lands Administration System (MLAS) was launched in April 2018, including the transfer of unpatented mining claims forms. This is simplifying the application process for users and reducing administrative burden.

Update the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation's forms repository

The government is proposing to remove multiple funding application forms from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) repository and replace them with a single, dynamic form that covers all NOHFC programs. This single application form will improve user experience by auto-populating generic information and adding specific questions from selected programs.

Simplify the process of issuing mining leases

The government is proposing to improve the mining lease application process by better supporting clients and correcting misconceptions about the process. This will support proponents and help improve the current costly and time consuming lease application process.

Streamline the sale of bulk sample end product for the mining industry

The government is proposing to streamline the sale and/or disposal of material collected through extracting bulk samples used for testing. Under certain conditions, proponents would no longer require permission to sell or dispose of the end product derived from the bulk sampling process. This would reduce regulatory burden for industry and unlock new value for many Ontario companies during mineral exploration.

Review bulk sample thresholds

The government is proposing to undertake a review of thresholds related to bulk sampling in O. Reg. 45/11 and O. Reg. 240/00 to ensure they meet the balance of a competitive mining sector with environmental protection and sustainability. This is a key component of Ontario's Critical Minerals Strategy Discussion Paper to support new critical mineral developments by looking for opportunities to provide flexibility and keep projects on track.

Take a graduated approach to closure planning

The government is proposing to strengthen and clarify the closure planning process as required in the *Mining Act*. Stakeholders have expressed concerns that closure plan regulations do not address different scales of operations, particularly for advanced exploration. Stakeholders say that smaller projects, such as critical mineral projects, are particularly impacted by the lack of scalability, flexibility and clarity in the current regulatory regime. Ontario's Critical Minerals Strategy Discussion paper commits to improving the graduated and scalable approach in the *Mining Act* for closure

planning, particularly for advanced exploration closure planning. It also commits to developing clear, public-facing guidance on the closure plan requirements under the *Mining Act*.

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Increase transparency and accountability for the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority

The Ontario government is making changes to the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPRA) to ensure it provides transparent, effective oversight for our new producer responsibility model. The government is amending RPRA's Operating Agreement which will finalize actions such as revising the operating agreement with RPRA, increasing data privacy, increasing oversight of costs, and establishing an industry advisory committee to help ensure transparency and effective oversight of the organization.

Reduce burdens and duplicative regulations for the tire industry

Ontario will consult on ways to reduce burdens for the tire industry by simplifying reporting requirements related to visible fees, while maintaining proper consumer protections. This change would remove duplicative rules that are currently in place through other legislation, such as the *Consumer Protection Act*. The proposal would also remove or reduce audit requirements related to the regulation.

Support the manufacturing sector by reducing environmental approval delays

Ontario is creating smarter, more efficient processes to reduce red tape for job creators in the auto sector and other manufacturing sectors, while maintaining strong environmental protections. The government is creating more flexible and outcome-based environmental permissions by giving companies the flexibility to make low-risk operational changes, such as increasing the recycling of materials, without having to seek permission from the ministry. This will enable companies to make changes to their facilities in a timely manner and reduce delays associated with the permission process.

Further protect drinking water and waterways during an emergency

The government is proposing changes that would allow the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to act quickly to ensure the province's drinking water and waterways are protected during an emergency. To ensure the province's drinking water systems and sewage works have the staff needed to continue operations, Ontario is proposing changes such as extending operator certificates, allowing wastewater training to be averaged over three years and allowing certain qualified but non-certified staff to temporarily maintain system operations.

Reduce reliance on fossil fuels to lower greenhouse gas emissions and divert waste from landfills

Ontario is proposing changes to the Alternative Low Carbon Fuels regulation to make it easier for manufacturers of cement, lime, iron, and steel to substitute the use of fossil fuels with low-carbon fuels derived from materials that would otherwise end up in landfills. Removing barriers to recover end-of-life materials (that cannot be reused or recycled) would enable these energy-intensive sectors to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, divert waste from landfills and help the province achieve our sustainable development goals and targets. For example, these changes would streamline the environmental compliance approvals process, which would help the sector save time, cut costs and reduce project delays.

Provide communities with more energy-efficient and reliable heat and power systems

The Ontario government is making it easier for more communities and businesses to benefit from combined heat and power technologies. Combined heat and power systems are an energy-efficient technology that generates electricity and heat using fuels such as natural gas or wood biomass. These systems can be used in buildings such as hospitals, colleges and universities, residential condos, commercial and industrial facilities — providing cheaper, more energy-efficient fuel sources, and more reliable power in emergency situations.

Simplify sampling and reporting for greenhouse growers

The government is proposing to create simple, clear sampling and reporting requirements to save greenhouse growers time and money as we work together to reduce phosphorus discharges that contribute to blue-green algae in our lakes and waterways.

Remove unnecessary barriers for brownfields redevelopment

Ontario is reducing barriers to redeveloping brownfield sites to help put vacant prime land back to use while maintaining protection of human health and the environment. To support this work, we are providing new and updated guidance to better clarify rules for property owners and municipalities.

Strengthen enforcement penalties for polluters

The government is delivering on its Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan commitment to hold polluters accountable by strengthening enforcement tools. Ontario is expanding the use of administrative monetary penalties to ensure compliance with environmental laws under the *Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act*. These new penalties would help ensure producers of tires, batteries, and electrical and electronic equipment recover and recycle their products appropriately, as set out in the law under the *Resources Recovery and Circular Economy Act*.

Focus on higher risk projects while streamlining permissions for water taking activities to build infrastructure faster

The government is proposing changes to help municipalities and businesses save time and money by moving low-risk, short-term water taking activities, such as pumping tests, to a more flexible approval process. Streamlining permissions for low-risk, short-term water taking activities still ensures appropriate environmental protections are in place for construction and infrastructure projects — which are vital to the province's economic recovery. These changes allow the ministry to focus its resources on higher-risk and more complex projects, which will help ensure that Ontario's water resources continue to be safeguarded.

Support innovation and recover the value of waste

Advanced recycling and energy recovery technologies can make it possible for hard-to-recycle plastics to have new and beneficial uses as new plastics, synthetic fuels or other uses. The Ontario government will soon be proposing changes to the environmental assessment process for advanced recycling technologies to ensure that valuable materials in waste are not lost to landfills. This initiative is one of the ways our government is following through on its Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan commitment to reduce the amount of waste going to landfills.

Reduce duplication in compliance requirements and expand self-registration to save businesses time and money

The Ontario government is reducing burden on businesses that conduct activities with little or no environmental impact by allowing certain sectors to self-register on the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry.

Introduce faster and better environmental permissions processes

The Ontario government continues to improve service efficiency and effectiveness by allowing online submissions for environmental permissions.

Reduce regulatory burden for industrial wastewater facilities while maintaining environmental protections

Ontario is providing industrial wastewater facilities with greater flexibility to make operational improvements by removing duplicative and unnecessary regulatory overlap, while maintaining strong environmental protections. These changes will provide facilities greater flexibility to make operational improvements, while keeping our waterways protected through the same level of strong oversight.

Ministry of Francophone Affairs

Amend the *French Language Services Act* to enable the French-language services designation of municipal and joint long-term care homes

The Ontario government is proposing to make it possible for municipal and joint long-term care homes to voluntarily seek a designation under the *French Language Services Act* (FLSA). The change would help to increase and protect access to French-language services in long-term care homes. This initiative responds to needs identified by the Francophone community.

Ministry of Government and Consumer Services

Consult on legislative and regulatory amendments under the *Motor Vehicle Dealers Act, 2002*

In June 2021, the Ontario government will begin consultations on potential legislative and regulatory changes under the *Motor Vehicle and Dealers Act*.

Ensure not-for-profit and other corporations can continue to conduct virtual meetings during COVID-19

Ontario is proposing changes to the *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, 2010* (ONCA), the *Corporations Act* (CA) and the *Cutting Unnecessary Red Tape Act, 2017* to ensure that Ontario not-for-profit corporations, share capital social clubs, and certain insurance corporations would, if passed, continue to be able to conduct virtual meetings during COVID-19, despite certain restrictions or requirements, when ONCA is proclaimed at a later date. The changes to ONCA would align with the temporary legislative amendments made to other ministry statutes, such as the CA, to provide certain corporations with the flexibility to hold virtual meetings during COVID-19. Other proposed housekeeping amendments to ONCA, if passed, would help to provide clarity to the sector when ONCA is proclaimed on a future date.

Ministry of Health

Better coordinate and connect the health care system

The government undertook a comprehensive review of provincial agencies to ensure they were relevant, effective, efficient, and provided value for money. Ontario is proposing changes to dissolve the Citizens' Council, the Pharmacy Council and the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council as recommended by the Agency Review Task Force (ARTF). The proposed changes support the government's broader goal of building an integrated, connected health care system centred around the needs of patients, while investing more tax dollars into frontline care.

Reduce the reporting burden on the health system

Data from health sector partners is essential to informing government priorities. The Ontario government is streamlining processes for data collection in order to reduce the burden on the health sector and, in turn, increase time for patient care.

Continue to recover costs for home and community care services

The Ontario government is proposing a consequential amendment to allow the province to continue to recover costs for home and community care services under the *Opioid Damages and Health Care Cost Recovery Act* once the *Home Care and Community Services Act* is repealed.

Consult to enhance the *Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act* to better enable innovation and the use of new and emerging technology

The Ministry proposes to consult on possible amendments to the *Healing Arts Radiation Protection Act* to better enable innovation and the use of emerging technology while ensuring necessary safety and quality for patients, workers and the public in the use of X-ray machines.

Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

Modernize notification requirements for construction projects to ensure worker safety

Currently, a notice of project must be filed if a construction project is expected to cost more than \$50,000 in materials and labour (\$250,000 for auto manufacturers and assemblers), or if a project involves work in one of a number of hazardous activities defined in the regulation under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Ontario is proposing to consult on options to replace the current \$50,000 monetary threshold, while enhancing hazard and risk-based reporting. This would better focus on identifying high-risk construction projects and protecting the health and safety of construction workers.

Ensure fairness for employees of temporary help agencies

Ontario is working to protect workers and temporary help agencies who follow the rules by ensuring all temporary help agencies comply with the *Employment Standards Act*. The government recently consulted on how we can crack down on underground agency operators who do not follow the rules, so that we can better protect temporary workers and level the playing field for businesses that comply with regulations. Ontario is reviewing input from stakeholders, including worker advocates and business leaders, and looks forward to reporting back on next steps.

Update first aid requirements to keep workers safe

Ontario is proposing to modernize workplace first aid rules by transferring responsibility for first aid from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, developing a new workplace first aid regulation, and establishing standards for

training and training providers. This would be the first update to Ontario's workplace first aid rules in almost 40 years.

Make it easier for employees to be paid through direct deposits

Proposed changes to the *Employment Standards Act* would eliminate an outdated requirement that an employer must obtain written employee consent to pay wages by direct deposit where an employee's financial institution is not within a "reasonable distance" of the employee's usual workplace. This change would eliminate an unnecessary requirement and make it easier for employees to receive their wages by direct deposit.

Modernize ventilation and other requirements in mines and mining plants

The Ontario government is planning to consult on a proposal to amend various existing requirements that apply in mines and mining plants, including those relating to mechanical ventilation systems. The proposed changes would increase flexibility for businesses, better reflect current technology and reduce regulatory burden, while maintaining or improving worker health and safety protections.

Make it simpler for businesses to submit WSIB premium payments

All Schedule 1 employers pay premiums directly to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). Employers also make payroll remittances to the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA). This proposal would streamline operations by enabling a "one-stop shop" for these payments, reducing the administrative burden on employers.

Make it easier to report workplace injuries and illnesses

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA), employers are required to provide notice and reports to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development and/or other specified workplace parties in relation to fatalities, critical injuries, occupational illnesses and other prescribed incidents or occurrences at the workplace.

Reporting requirements are currently found in several different regulations under the OHSA and are not consistent, and some workplaces do not fall under a specific regulation. This can cause confusion for employers. To address this, Ontario is proposing to make it easier for businesses to report injuries and illnesses in the workplace by consolidating reporting requirements into a single regulation.

Help businesses with safety reviews

Ontario is proposing amendments to clarify when factories need to conduct safety reviews on certain machinery or processes before they are used or modified, as well as to streamline existing requirements. The proposed changes would make it easier for businesses to comply, while maintaining existing worker health and safety protections.

Consult on harmonizing head protection requirements

Currently, requirements for hard hats are different across regulations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Ontario is consulting on ways to make requirements around the use of hard hats more consistent across sectors. This would provide more clarity to employers, support better compliance with the regulations, and ensure workers continue to be protected on the job.

Keep employees who work at heights safe on the job

Ontario is reviewing the working at heights training program to find ways we can improve standards for training content and delivery, equipment, and other key issues. The government is committed to ensuring employees who work at heights continue to receive high-quality training and are safe on the job.

Modernize inspections to expand the use of self-audits

Under the *Employment Standards Act*, employment standards officers regularly consider requiring employers to conduct self-audits of their records to report back on whether they are in compliance on matters such as minimum wage, overtime pay, hours of work and rest periods, instead of the audit being performed by the officer. These self-audits are a useful tool that can help drive compliance as the employers can identify and correct systemic problems in their companies and better understand their responsibilities under the act.

The Ontario government is proposing to enable officers to use self-audits more extensively, and to clarify that officers can require the employer to complete a self-audit in situations where they are already aware the owner is not complying with the act. Expanding the use of self-audits would provide an opportunity for officers to guide non-compliant employers towards becoming compliant and self-sufficient. The change would align the self-audit and inspections processes, making them easier for employers to understand and navigate. Employment standards officers would continue to oversee the self-audits process to make sure it is done correctly and provide assistance to employers.

Improve the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program

The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program reviews applications and issues nominations to foreign nationals who have the skills and experience needed to support Ontario's economy. The proposed legislative amendments are necessary to improve the program's ability to detect fraud and misrepresentation, to streamline legislated program timelines for internal reviews, and to align with imminent changes to federal legislation.

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Establish a digital “one-stop shop” to help navigate Ontario’s development approvals and permitting process.

Ontario businesses that want to develop land — whether building homes or businesses — need to comply with a range of rules related to land use planning, health and safety, and environmental protection. Businesses need clear information about the legal requirements they must meet, approvals processes, and typical timelines for land development so their projects can be successful. This initiative will save time and reduce confusion by providing guidance on provincial approvals needed for land development in Ontario in one easy-to-access location.

Delay repeal of the *Statute Labour Act*

The outdated *Statute Labour Act* was set to be repealed on July 1, 2021. Due to COVID-19, the government is proposing to move the repeal date to January 1, 2022 to provide more time for affected communities to transition to new road management models administered by the Ministry of Transportation.

Extend York Region's increased debt-limit rules

Ontario is extending York Region's increased debt-limit rules – the annual repayment limit – for an additional 10 years until December 31, 2031. They were set to expire at the end of this year. This would continue to give the region more borrowing room for capital projects without first having to get approval from the Local Planning and Appeal Tribunal.

The annual repayment limit represents the maximum amount a municipality may spend on principal and interest payments each year for long term-debt before being required to seek this approval for new long-term debt. Since 2011, under the increased debt-limit rules set out in a regulation under the *Municipal Act, 2001*, York Region has included up to 80 per cent of the average development charges collected over the last three years in their annual repayment limit calculation.

Help municipalities outside the Greater Golden Horseshoe forecast and determine future land needs through a public consultation to update the province's Projection Methodology Guideline

The Ontario government will be launching a public consultation to update the Projection Methodology Guideline. The update will provide best practices for preparing long-term population, housing and employment forecasts and determining related land needs for municipalities outside of the area covered by the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. A discussion paper will be posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario.

Publish online guidance document on site plan control

The Ontario government is preparing a guidance document on site plan control that provides an overview of the legislative framework, how it works, and best practices municipalities may want to consider to support streamlining decisions on applications for site plan approvals.

Make Ontario's subdivision control system clearer for the real estate sector

The *Planning Act* sets out how land is divided into new parcels and how these parcels may be sold. The Ontario government is proposing amendments to the Act that, if passed, would address a number of long-standing issues. These technical and policy changes would reduce red tape, simplify subdivision control and save owners and applicants time and money, while ensuring the land use planning objectives of the Act are upheld.

Support economic recovery through provincially significant employment zones

Within the Greater Golden Horseshoe, provincially significant employment zones (PSEZs) are lands protected from being converted to non-employment uses without provincial approval. The government plans to consult with stakeholders over the next year on how PSEZs can be used to support economic development after upper- and single-tier municipalities have completed their municipal comprehensive reviews by July 2022.

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Improve the regulatory framework for compressed air energy storage

The Ontario government is recommending regulatory changes under the *Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act* to regulate compressed air energy storage projects in underground porous rock reservoirs.

Improve hunter reporting compliance

The Ontario government is making changes to the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997*, to enable the implementation of a cost-effective compliance tool that reduces the administrative burden on the government.

Support timely erosion control on shore land property

The government is amending a regulation under the *Public Lands Act* to support timely erosion control activities on shore land property. Currently, low-risk applications to maintain, repair or replace an existing erosion control structure face a 10-day waiting period between submission of the notice of activity and the earliest possible date for work to start. The proposed change would remove that waiting period, supporting timely completion of low-risk erosion control activities where the landowner follows required rules, while reducing inconvenience and delays for shore land property owners and their agents.

Remove a regulatory burden on wood storage yards

Ontario is amending the *Public Lands Act* Ontario Regulation 161/17 to make wood storage a 'free occupational use' of Crown land. Once the regulation is amended, the forest industry will no longer require authorization under the *Public Lands Act* for their wood storage yards on Crown land, where such approvals are provided for through the forest management planning process.

Introduce a new land use planning tool for *Niagara Escarpment Planning Development Act*

Currently, the area where proposed developments need a permit from the Niagara Escarpment Commission is identified through a text-based format. The regulation change allows users to reference a map instead of lengthy text descriptions. This will reduce burdens for users and ensure approvals properly reflect the precise boundary of the area overseen by the commission.

Ministry of Transportation

Support Ontario's auto tech industry through innovative pilot programs

In response to advances in technology, Ontario will be consulting with auto and tech industry stakeholders on changes to the Automated Vehicle Pilot Program to help ensure Ontario remains a global leader in the connected and automated vehicle industry. Changes that may be consulted on include testing micro-utility devices such as personal delivery devices, adding new vehicle types such as automated farm vehicles and removing certain restrictions around modified automated vehicles. Continuing to support Ontario's auto tech industry will help our economy recover, bring jobs and investment to Ontario, and deliver exciting new choices for drivers, businesses and transit riders.

Accelerate highway construction through extended work hours during COVID-19

On most of Ontario's highways and on the busier 400-series highways, the hours of construction work and time of day are typically restricted to lessen the impact of traffic delay/congestion. As most highways saw traffic volumes decreasing due to COVID-19, the government has relaxed its requirements on certain projects to allow work during extended hours.

Introduce online sticker renewal for heavy commercial vehicle licence plates

Ontario is making government services faster, more accessible and more convenient for people to use by moving forward with online licence plate sticker renewals for heavy commercial vehicles. Currently, owners of heavy commercial vehicles over 3,000 kg, bus/school bus and farm vehicles must renew their licence plate stickers in person at a ServiceOntario centre. Introducing online

renewals will save people and businesses time and money by letting people renew their licence plate stickers at their convenience from their home or office.

Reduce costs for the construction industry by modernizing highway contract management services

The Ontario government is upgrading the software used to administer and manage highway contracts. The improved software and the elimination of user fees will save businesses approximately \$2.4 million per year.

Streamline land development applications to save businesses and government time and money

Ontario is streamlining its processes for land development applications by continuing to improve the online portal for highway permits. These improvements will allow municipalities and developers to submit land development applications, track the status of submissions and access comments, all from a convenient online public portal. This will save businesses and government time and money.

Increase safety for trucking companies participating in the Long Combination Vehicle Program

Ontario is making changes to the Long Combination Vehicle (LCV) Program that will cut red tape for commercial truckers, increase safety and level the playing field for trucking companies participating in the program. The changes will respond to requests from trucking companies participating in the LCV Program, while helping to reduce costs and increase productivity for participants operating in the program.

Support discussion on universal trail permitting for off-road vehicles

The Ontario government is working with Ontario's off-road vehicle (ORV) community, including clubs, retailers, tour operators and the trails community, to support industry discussions on how to simplify the existing patchwork system of permits for ORV trails by potentially creating one mandatory permit that would give users access to ORV trails across Ontario.

Streamline highway contract tendering and award processes

Ontario is modernizing its highway construction and engineering contract processes by allowing administrative services, such as signing and submitting contract documents, to be done electronically. This saves businesses time and money by reducing the administrative burden and helps the government process highway contracts faster.

Increase transparency for provincial road building through a new online technical consultation portal

The proposed online technical consultation portal is a digital tool which will provide a single location for stakeholders and partners to comment on new and revised ministry standards, specifications and practices for road building and maintenance. The approach encourages broad participation from a wide variety of participants and will make information and resources more accessible.

Create an Automated Speed Enforcement and Red-Light Camera Exemption for first responders

Ontario will work with stakeholders, including municipalities and first responders, to explore creating an exemption for emergency vehicles to charges resulting from Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) and Red-Light Cameras (RLCs). A potential exemption would cut red tape for first responder

services by removing the costs and administrative burdens related to contesting ASE and RLC charges that arise from the performance of first responders' duties.

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