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MEDIA RELEASE

Eastern Ontario Wardens and Mayors meet with Premier Wynne

NEWS

Members of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) and the Eastern Ontario Mayors' Caucus (EOMC) met with the Premier of Ontario, Kathleen Wynne, in Kingston on Wednesday afternoon to discuss key issues and concerns for Eastern Ontario.

The face-to-face meeting with the region's representatives was held at the request of Premier Wynne, who was in the City in Kingston to address the Chamber of Commerce.

QUOTES

"This was an important opportunity for the EOWC and the EOMC to speak directly to the Premier about the situation here in Eastern Ontario facing our communities, our residents and our businesses," stated Peter Emon, Chair of the EOWC and Warden of the County of Renfrew. "We certainly appreciated the Premier's invitation to talk to her about some of our key issues and projects."

"It was an open and frank discussion," said Hastings County Warden Rick Phillips. "The Wardens and Mayors spoke about the need for further, real relief to the high costs of electricity for our residents, particularly those who have low or limited incomes. These residents simply can't manage the financial burden caused by these soaring rates."

"We informed the Premier that there were a number of specific issues and projects that her Government should consider to help drive our local economies forward as well as several issues the Government should take action on – all of which help municipalities control their operating costs going forward," said Bryan Paterson, Chair of the EOMC and Mayor of the City of Kingston.

“Our group conveyed the importance of making our citizens and business owners feel included in the Province’s current agenda. For example, investments in road systems and energy infrastructure are just as important to smaller communities across eastern Ontario, as funding for public transit is to the major urban centres,” added Emon.

“The Premier heard a coordinated and collaborative message from municipal leaders that represent more than a million people across our region and we are hopeful that she will take action once she returns to Queen’s Park,” concluded Emon and Paterson.

Specific Actions for the Province of Ontario

- Investing $1.5 billion over the next 20 years to expand natural gas in rural communities and farmers across eastern and southwestern Ontario.
- Supporting the Picton Terminals and Marmora Pump Storage projects.
- Supporting the expansion of mobile broadband and emergency first responder services in eastern Ontario through improved cellular networks and a public safety broadband network.
- Investing significant additional funding in critical municipal infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water and wastewater facilities.
- Helping control municipal operating costs by fixing the interest arbitration system and the heavy financial burden created by the joint and several liability approach currently being taken by the courts.

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