

ONTARIO BUILDING FORTRESS AM-CAN TO STRENGTHEN SECURITY



DOUG FORD

PREMIER OF ONTARIO

PROUDLY SUPPORTING LOCAL
BUSINESSES ACROSS ONTARIO

Premier Doug Ford outlined Ontario's plan to strengthen security on land, water and in the air along the Canada-U.S. border, including protecting Arctic sovereignty, as a key component of Fortress Am-Can, a renewed strategic alliance between Canada and the United States. For the plan to succeed, the province is calling on the federal government to step up and take measurable and visible action to better secure our borders.

"Ontario continues to call on the federal government to do more to protect our borders and reaffirm our sovereignty," said Premier Doug Ford. "Building Fortress Am-Can is our government's plan for a renewed strategic alliance between America and Canada and demonstrates our responsibility as an essential ally dedicated to protecting our land, air and water. In an increasingly unstable world, Fortress Am-Can can protect integrated supply chains, ensure our economic stability and growth, and detect and prevent any threat to our two nations. Ontario is ready and has the strategic capabilities to do our part to get this done."

Ontario recently launched Operation Deterrence, the province's preparedness and

planning framework for enhanced security at international borders and tackling criminal activity that is harming people on both sides of the border. This includes an emergency response team of 200 officers who along with frontline and speciality officers, are enhancing border security in partnership with the RCMP and have already detected, disrupted and deterred illegal activity at the border.

The Operation is in addition to ongoing efforts to better protect Ontario-U.S. borders and combat cross-border illegal activity and ensure public safety, including the OPP's Joint Forces Border Drug Interdiction Task Force, which was stood up as an expansion to a number of ongoing multi-jurisdictional drug investigations, with participants including the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, RCMP, Canada Border Services Agency and a number of municipal and First Nations police services.

To build Fortress Am-Can and ensure Canada is seen as a reliable partner ready to protect Am-Can land, air and water, Ontario recommends the following:

Present a credible and accelerated plan to meet and

exceed Canada's two per cent NATO target for defence spending, including investing in the future success of NORAD operations and NORAD base restoration.

Invest in Canada's unique strategic capabilities and competencies, including Ontario's critical mass of innovation in artificial intelligence to support the future of autonomous combat aerial and underwater vehicles for both military and border security and detection purposes.

Expanding Canada's shipbuilding capacity to build new ice breakers and other equipment and assets, including increasing capacity at Ontario-based shipbuilding facilities, to protect Canada's Arctic and meet other security objectives.

Work with the U.S. to capture new and catalyzing investments that support accelerated access to urgently needed strategic and critical minerals to qualify as part of Canada's NATO contributions.

Secure Am-Can borders and key economic and trade corridors, including the St. Lawrence Seaway, Windsor-Detroit Gateway and the Gordie Howe International Bridge, which is scheduled to open at the end of 2025.

Stem the cross-border flow of illegal guns, contraband

tobacco and illegal drugs like fentanyl. This should include increased permanent funding for increased oversight and support at the border and enhanced tools for law enforcement, as well as investments to expand cross-border coordination and operations between American and Canadian security and policing agencies.

Enhance tracking and tracing of illicit drugs by investing in new laboratory technology that will allow Canada to identify where fentanyl and other drugs seized by police services are manufactured for enhanced tracking and tracing.

Allow for enhanced data and intelligence sharing between federal, provincial, territorial and local police forces to promote better coordination. Lower thresholds for Am-Can intelligence sharing on the cross-border movements of convicted sex offenders.

Crack down on illegal immigration, which threatens shared Am-Can national security, and invest in enhanced biometrics capabilities at Canada's points of entry, including better tracking of entries and exits across Canada's borders.

Further promote joint training, operations and scenario-planning between American and Canadian armed forces, particularly in the Arctic, including by expanding Canada's advanced fighter pilot training resources.

Ontario is uniquely positioned to leverage artificial intelligence and other computing advancements for the

future security needs of Canada and the U.S. With more than 400 artificial intelligence firms and institutions, Canada and Ontario are at the centre of an AI-enabled future. Ontario is a world-leader in developing AI talent and Toronto has the highest concentration of AI startups in Canada. Ontario has generated close to \$14 billion in technology investments over the last three years including many in AI.

"Protecting the safety and security of our borders with reinforced tools and technology is essential to building Fortress Am-Can," said Solicitor General Michael Kerzner. "Through Operation Deterrence, Ontario has stepped up at a critical time to support the federal government and international interests; but we need the federal government to also step up with stronger measures that will keep our borders and communities secure."

"Our government is taking decisive steps to establish strong, fair and proactive security on both sides of the border," said Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. "We need the federal government to act swiftly on the recommendations proposed today to ensure the safety of our workforce, the resilience of our businesses and the growth of our shared economy."

To help America decouple from China, we recently announced enhancing and building out the integrated Am-Can energy and electricity

grid, including nuclear energy, to encourage more exports of Canadian energy and electricity to the U.S. and by establishing a new Am-Can Critical Mineral Security Alliance that invests in and builds out American and Canadian critical mineral supply chains, including by significantly expanding Am-Can processing capacity.

Ontario has called on the federal government to address U.S. economic and security concerns, including by matching U.S. tariffs on China, banning Chinese software in cars on Canadian roads, delaying the implementation of the digital services tax and presenting a credible plan to meet and exceed Canada's two per cent NATO defence spending commitments.

If Ontario were a standalone country, it would be the U.S.'s third-largest trading partner with a near-perfect balance in two-way trade totalling CAD \$493 billion in 2023, employing millions of workers on both sides of the border.

Ontario is the number one export destination for 17 U.S. states and number two to 11 others. Every day, millions of Americans wake up, go to work and earn a paycheck to make something that's sold to a customer in Ontario.

Growing Ontario's shipbuilding and repair workforce is part of the province's strategy to strengthen the province's position as a leader in marine transportation, as outlined in The Future of the Great Lakes Economy: Ontario's Marine Transportation Strategy.

THE OSHAWA DURHAM CENTRAL NEWSPAPER

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ONTARIO REDUCING COSTS FOR FUTURE HOMEOWNERS

TORONTO –The Ontario government is removing barriers that slow the construction of new homes and businesses by making it easier and more affordable to connect to the province's world-class clean electricity grid.

According to Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator, the province's demand for electricity is forecast to increase by 75 per cent by 2050. That includes growing demand from new homes and industry, each of which will need to be connected to the province's growing grid. Under existing rules, the process can be slow and burden homebuyers and new businesses with unreasonable costs.

"Too many families face barriers to homeownership, and that is why we are acting on all fronts to reduce the cost for future homeowners and investors," said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Energy and Electrification. "We are taking a generational lens to fixing a long-standing barrier for young Canadians to enter the housing market. As our population increases, our government will act decisively to implement our plan to connect the "last mile" so that ultimately, we cut costs for prospective homeowners and end the barriers to job-creating investment."

The government intends to introduce legislation that will, if passed, support the con-

struction of new homes and businesses by making it easier and more affordable to make those "last mile" connections. The legislation would amend the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 to enable regulation making authority to protect existing ratepayers while reducing upfront capital costs of new lines that would otherwise increase the costs to new homes and businesses.

Minister Lecce has also asked the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) to implement all recommendations from its Housing Connections Report, to dramatically reduce barriers to home building, job-creating investment, and agricultural expansion. Ontario's plan to reduce costs for families and businesses owners includes:

Amending the Distribution System Code (DSC) to extend the revenue horizon for connecting residential developments from 25 years up to 40 years, allowing the costs of new infrastructure that will serve this province for generations to be spread over a longer period.

Amending the DSC to provide clarity regarding the conditions under which a local distribution company should extend the connection horizon for new developments.

Establishing a new capacity allocation model that considers multi customer, multi-year projects.

Establishing a Housing Electricity Growth Forum to bring together designated municipalities with housing targets, impacted local utilities, industry and construction leaders, and the OEB to discuss ways to accelerate connections while reducing costs. Minister Lecce also asked the OEB to consider further amendments to the DSC to extend the connection horizon for new electricity lines to housing development projects to 15 years.

"Our government knows that we need all hands-on deck when it comes to addressing the province's growth and housing supply challenges," said Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "We owe it to the hardworking people of Ontario to help deliver the fully functioning infrastructure that supports the homes they need."

These moves to reduce the costs of connecting to the grid will form a key part of the government's vision for the future of the energy sector, which will be released in the coming days, and build on Powering Ontario's Growth, the government's pragmatic plan to meet growing energy demand and reduce emissions by expanding Ontario's reliable, affordable and clean grid, including: Ontario's Largest Competitive Energy Procurement – Advancing competitive procurement for new energy resources to Ontario's grow-

ing energy needs.

Nuclear Energy – Advancing reliable, affordable and clean nuclear power through pre-development work at Bruce Power, four small modular reactors at Darlington and supporting Ontario Power Generation's plan for refurbishing the Pickering Nuclear Generation Station.

New Transmission Infrastructure – Designating and prioritizing transmissions lines in Southwestern, Northeastern and Eastern Ontario that will power job creators including EV and EV battery manufacturing and clean steel production.

Keeping Costs Down – Launching new energy efficiency programs on January 1, 2025, building on the government's \$342 million expansion of existing energy efficiency programs which are helping families and businesses reduce their electricity use so they can save money on their energy bills.

Additional Competitive Procurements – A successful re-contracting of existing resources at about a 30 per cent discount and planning more competitive procurements for non-emitting electricity resources including wind, solar, hydroelectric, and bioenergy.

New regulatory making authority could allow the government to reduce costs for first-mover customers by allowing costs of new infra-

structure to be allocated as additional customers in high-growth areas connect to the line, rather than all costs being paid by the "first mover." The Housing Electricity Growth Forum will be chaired by the Deputy Minister of Energy and Electrification and the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The first meeting will take place before the end of the year.

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"We are actively listening to

job creators in every industry across Ontario, addressing the barriers they've identified around connecting to the energy grid quickly and cost-effectively. By providing tools to get faster, more responsive, and more affordable last-mile connections to the grid, we're ensuring industries can continue to invest and grow in our province, creating good, high-paying jobs for families now and into the future. We have also heard from Local Distribution Companies across the province about the need to continue efforts to build out the last mile connection and will continue working with them to ensure economic growth in every community in Ontario."

- Sam Oosterhoff
Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries

"As our province continues to attract record numbers of new investments by both domestic and international companies, these businesses will require clean, affordable and reliable sources of energy as they expand and grow their operations in Ontario. Reducing electricity cost burdens on businesses will help to ensure a competitive business climate that will spur economic growth and the creation of new, good-paying jobs for our highly skilled workforce."

- Vic Fedeli
Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade