

TED ARNOTT, MPP WELLINGTON-HALTON HILLS



Keeping in Touch – Fall 2014



MPP Arnott hits the ground running after being re-elected

Building the Highway 6 Morriston bypass, full-day, two-way GO train service, and improved rural high speed internet are three key priorities for Wellington-Halton Hills, says MPP Ted Arnott.

Mr. Arnott laid out these priorities in a statement in the Ontario Legislature on July 7.

“Highway 6 serves as a vital link between the 401 and the Hamilton-Niagara region and the U.S. border,” said Mr. Arnott. “A bypass around Morriston will eliminate a major traffic bottleneck, improve safety, and allow for the free flow of goods to the border.”

The veteran MPP also raised the issue of full-day, two-way GO train service between Waterloo Region and Toronto, through Wellington-Halton Hills, and raised questions about the Government’s election commitment.

“During the election campaign, the Government promised full-day, two-way GO train service between Waterloo Region and the GTA,” he pointed out. “What is the timeframe

for keeping this commitment? How does the government define ‘full-day, two-way train service’? Will this include more stops in Wellington-Halton Hills?”

The third point Mr. Arnott emphasized is the need to develop a public/private partnership to ensure access to high speed internet in rural Ontario. He expressed support for the call to action on this issue by the Western Ontario Wardens’ Caucus.



SWEARING IN – On July 2, Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott was sworn in for his 7th term of office. Mr. Arnott is pictured with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Deb Deller. MPPs were back to work at Queen’s Park starting on July 2, as the Ontario Legislature commenced a summer sitting of the Provincial Parliament.

“Lack of access to high speed internet in rural Ontario continues to be a concern. Reliable and affordable access to high speed internet is essential in today’s economy,” Mr. Arnott argued. “A provincial strategy for expanding affordable high speed internet would help our local businesses grow and attract new investment to our rural communities.”

On July 3, the very first day it was possible to do so in the new Parliament, Mr. Arnott tabled three separate Private Member’s Resolutions highlighting each of these issues. They are the first three items on the Legislative Assembly’s Order Paper.

He had previously outlined these issues in a letter he wrote to the Premier on June 13, the very first day after the recent provincial election.

“I want to again express my thanks to the voters of Wellington-Halton Hills for returning me to the Ontario Legislature for another term,” Mr. Arnott said. “I am honoured to be back to work on their behalf.”

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The riding of Wellington-Halton Hills

Recently, the Federal Government undertook a process of planning the redistribution of the federal riding boundaries for seats in the House of Commons in Ottawa. This work was done by an independent Electoral Boundaries Commission.

As a result of this process, after the next federal election, Ontario will receive 15 new seats.

New riding boundaries have been established for many ridings. However, the boundaries of the federal riding of Wellington-Halton Hills, represented by MP Michael Chong since 2004, will remain unchanged.

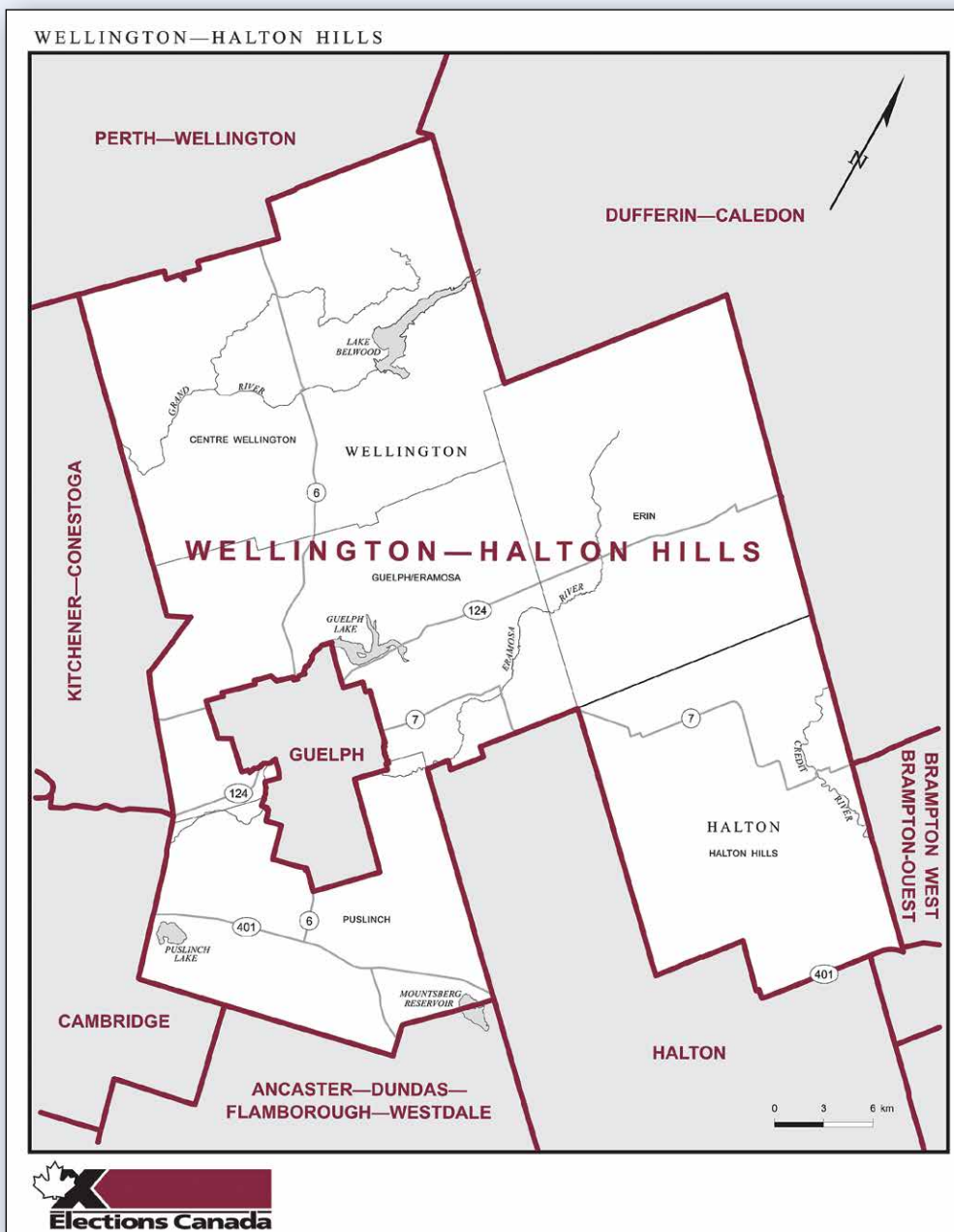
In September, the Premier of Ontario publicly proposed that the Ontario Legislature should expand from 107 to 122 seats, so that the provincial ridings in southern

Ontario would mirror the new federal ridings. Assuming the Ontario Legislature passes a bill reflecting her wishes, these changes would take effect in the next provincial election, expected in 2018.

This would mean the provincial riding of Wellington-Halton Hills, represented in the Ontario Legislature by MPP Ted Arnott since 2007, would remain intact for the next provincial election.

The riding of Wellington-Halton Hills is composed of the municipalities of:

- The Township of Centre Wellington
- The Town of Erin
- The Township of Guelph/Eramosa
- The Town of Halton Hills
- The Township of Puslinch



MPP Arnott continues to raise alarm bell about debt, deficit

The size of Ontario's debt and the province's growing deficit remain a major concern for Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott.

Despite the Government's commitment to balance the budget by 2017-18, this year's budget actually increases the provincial deficit by two billion dollars to \$12.5 billion, up from \$10.5 billion last year.

The net provincial debt is also expected to climb by another \$20 billion to \$289 billion.

"Not only does spending remain out of control, but the deficit is actually increasing year over year," noted Mr. Arnott. "Are we really expected to believe that the budget will magically balance itself in three years' time?"

Mr. Arnott has long pointed out that there are serious repercussions to the Government's failure to rein in spending.

"This year they're spending \$11 billion just to pay interest on the debt," he noted.

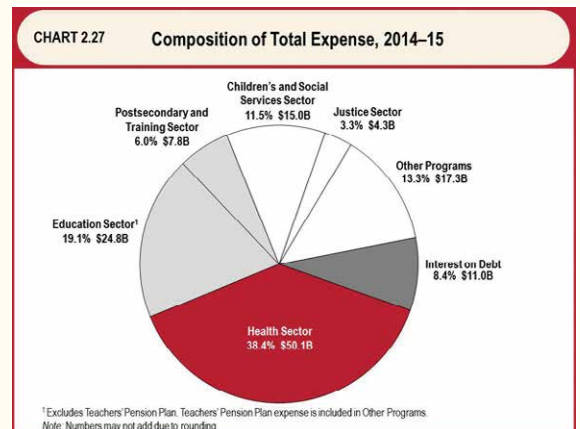
"With a \$12.5 billion deficit and an \$11 billion interest payment, they're essentially

making the interest payments with borrowed money," said Mr. Arnott. "It's as if they're paying their credit card bill with a line of credit. This approach is unsustainable and eventually leads to insolvency."

In fact, Mr. Arnott pointed out that not only are interest payments on the provincial debt the third highest expense item in the budget – behind only health care and education – but interest payments are also the fastest growing expense in the budget, expected to rise by almost 8% per year in coming years.

"In good years, we should be paying down the provincial debt, not continuing to add to it. We should not be spending money that we don't have, and leaving the bill for our children and grandchildren," Mr. Arnott concluded.

Postscript: A recent report by the Conference Board of Canada, *More Action Needed to Balance the Books*, confirmed that "balancing the books by the target date of 2017-18 will likely require spending cuts or tax increases in addition to those already planned for in the 2014 budget."



Source: 2014 Ontario Budget

KEY NUMBERS PRESENTED IN THE 2014-15 BUDGET

- Projected deficit: \$12.5 billion.**
 Up from \$10.5 billion last year (*deficit number for 2013-14, updated on September 22*).
- Projected provincial debt: \$289 billion.** Up from \$269 billion last year. The debt was \$139 billion in 2003.
- Government spending: \$130 billion.**
 Up from \$126.4 billion last year (*spending number for 2013-14, updated on September 22*).
- Net debt per capita (in effect, the amount owed by each and every Ontarian): \$21,019.** It was \$11,339 in 2003.
- Interest payments on the debt: \$11 billion.** Up from \$10.6 billion last year. Interest on the debt is the third largest expenditure in the provincial budget, behind only health care and education. Interest payments are projected to rise by almost 8% per year for the foreseeable future and are expected to be the fastest growing expense item in the provincial budget.



Pull over for flashing green light



FLASHING GREEN LIGHT – Across the province, the flashing green light is used by volunteer firefighters on their way to an emergency.
(Photo courtesy of the Orillia Packet & Times)

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the passage of an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act, allowing volunteer firefighters to use a flashing green light on their vehicles when responding to an emergency.

Ted Arnott introduced the Bill in the Ontario Legislature during his first term as an MPP, and it was passed into law in 1994.

This past spring, Mr. Arnott delivered a statement in the Ontario Legislature to raise awareness about the flashing green light for volunteer firefighters:

In 1994, 20 years ago, the Ontario Legislature passed the amendment to the Highway Traffic Act which allowed our volunteer firefighters to use a flashing green light on their cars or trucks when responding to an emergency. This was the very first private member's bill of mine that was passed into law.

Working together two decades ago to build support, I remember the strong support of Wellington county fire chiefs like Clifford's Dennis Kaufman and Doug Smith of Puslinch township.

Today, we are joined in the House by Wayne Nie, who is chair of the Board of Directors of the Fire Fighters Association of Ontario. Welcome, Wayne, and thank you very much for coming here today.

All of our province's firefighters deserve our special appreciation, but our volunteer firefighters are the

day-to-day heroes of small-town Ontario. We can never say thanks often enough, and that's why I've raised many of their concerns in the House over the years.

Even after 20 years, more needs to be done to raise public awareness of volunteer firefighters' flashing green lights, especially for our urban residents who may be visiting rural Ontario. Many rural municipalities have erected road signs to inform motorists, but the province could do much more to help remind drivers that a flashing green light on a car or truck means that a firefighter is on the way to an emergency and minutes can mean life or death for a family like yours, so make way.

I urge the Ministers of Community Safety and Transportation to work together to develop a strategy to continue to raise public awareness to ensure that our firefighters can respond to emergencies swiftly and safely, fulfilling their important calling and mission and saving lives.



NORTH HALTON TWISTERS – Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott was on hand for the announcement of a grant of \$140,000 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for the North Halton Girl's Hockey Association. The funds will be used to enhance player development, female referee development, and to provide mentorship programs.

(Photo courtesy of the Independent and Free Press)

CF Drug to be covered by Ministry of Health

On June 20, the Government announced that KALYDECO, a new medication which appears to be a miracle treatment for some cystic fibrosis patients, will be covered by the Province

“This is a huge relief to many families across Ontario who have a loved one suffering from CF, including the Phipps and the Bain families from Georgetown,” said Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott.

Over the past two years, Mr. Arnott had repeatedly pushed the Government to expedite approval for the new medication.

He first raised the need to fund KALYDECO with the Minister of

Health in December 2012, when the issue was brought to his attention by Nigel and Shelley Phipps of Georgetown. Their daughter Maddie has shown great progress since receiving treatment with KALYDECO.

In a statement in the Ontario Legislature on July 16, Mr. Arnott acknowledged Opposition Leader Jim Wilson and Health Critic Christine Elliott for their efforts in advocating for KALYDECO funding.

He also pointed out that while KALYDECO is now covered by the Province, there are families who have already spent thousands of dollars out of their own pockets for KALYDECO prior to the Government’s announcement.



Photo: www.kalydeco.com

“I would encourage the Minister of Health to instruct his staff to look into this on a compassionate, case-by-case basis and compensate the families who may have no alternative but to pay for KALYDECO out of their own pockets.”



PROGRESS ON NEW GROVES HOSPITAL – On June 17, Ted joined County of Wellington officials to break the ground on a new street to be built near the future site of the new Groves Memorial Community Hospital. The work includes bringing sewer, water, and hydro services to the site. Working with local partners, Mr. Arnott has strongly supported the hospital project for many years.

(Photos courtesy of the Wellington Advertiser)



UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH – Ted attended the Official Opening of the University of Guelph’s 50th Anniversary Exhibit at the Guelph Civic Museum. The University of Guelph is ranked as one of Canada’s finest comprehensive universities. Last year the Ontario Legislature passed a Private Member’s Bill honouring Lincoln Alexander, the former Chancellor of the University of Guelph. Mr. Arnott initiated the Bill and it was co-sponsored by Liberal MPP Bas Balkissoon and NDP MPP Paul Miller.

(Photo courtesy of Grant W. Martin Photography)

Premier acknowledges importance of Morriston bypass

In Question Period on July 8, Premier Kathleen Wynne publicly acknowledged the importance of the Highway 6 Morriston bypass and Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott's efforts to get the project onto the Ministry of Transportation's 5 year plan for highway construction.

In response to a question from Opposition Leader Jim Wilson, Premier Wynne said: "We understand the constraints that have to be in place. But the other reality is that there are investments needed. I would just like to call attention to a statement that the member for Wellington-Halton Hills made yesterday..."

Mr. Arnott's statement the previous day had begun by highlighting the importance of the Highway 6 Morriston bypass and the need to get the project onto the Ministry of Transportation's 5 year plan.

"I'm glad that the Premier has finally acknowledged that the Morriston bypass is needed," said Mr. Arnott. "As a former Minister of Transportation, she must know the importance of this project."

"It's clear that the Premier is paying attention," he added. "I just hope that the new Minister of Transportation was listening too."

Page 265 of the 2014 Ontario Budget Papers indicates that the Ontario Government plans to spend almost \$2.5 billion on provincial highway infrastructure this fiscal year.

"Now that the Premier has acknowledged the need for this project in the Legislature, I hope that we will soon see the Highway 6 Morriston bypass added to the Ministry's 5 year plan," said Mr. Arnott.

Working with Township of Puslinch Council and the County of Wellington, Mr. Arnott has persistently raised the need for the Highway 6 Morriston bypass in the Ontario Legislature for many years.



SUMMER SOCIAL – The Arnott family enjoy a summer social at the Butterfly Gardens in Fergus on August 10. The event coincided with the Fergus Scottish Festival and Highland Games.



GEORGETOWN MARKET PLACE – Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott helped celebrate the grand opening of phase two of the Georgetown Market Place mall in April. The newly expanded mall is now home to more than 60 retail outlets.

(Photo courtesy of the Independent and Free Press)



NEW YEAR'S SOCIAL – Mr. Arnott hosted his annual New Year's Social in January. The event drew a large crowd from across Wellington-Halton Hills, including MP Michael Chong and his son Alistair.

