

TED ARNOTT, MPP WELLINGTON-HALTON HILLS



Keeping in Touch – Update 2014



Lincoln Alexander Day Bill passes into law

On November 28, Bill 125, *An Act to Proclaim Lincoln Alexander Day in Ontario*, was passed into law in a unanimous vote in the Ontario Legislature.

The Bill was a Private Member's Bill brought forward by Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott and was co-sponsored by Liberal MPP Bas Balkissoon and NDP MPP Paul Miller. It designates January 21 of each year as Lincoln Alexander Day in Ontario.

"I'm glad that we were able to work together to give Lincoln Alexander the honour he deserves for his record of distinguished service to our province," said Mr. Arnott. "I have always been willing to reach out to members of all

parties to get things done. That is what the people of Ontario expect, but don't see happening often enough."

Lincoln Alexander was born on January 21, 1922. He served in the House of Commons from 1968 to 1980, representing riding of Hamilton West. In 1979, he was appointed Minister of Labour, making history as Canada's first black Cabinet Minister. He later served as Chair of the Workers' Compensation Board of Ontario, as Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and as Chancellor of the University of Guelph.

He passed away in October 2012.

In a rare occurrence, Bill 125 passed both Second and Third Reading in the Ontario Legislature on the same day. This required the unanimous consent of all MPPs.

On January 21, Mr. Arnott attended the Lincoln Alexander Awards for Leadership in Eliminating Racial Discrimination at Queen's Park, marking the first Lincoln Alexander Day in Ontario.



LINCOLN ALEXANDER DAY – January 21 is now Lincoln Alexander Day in Ontario. Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott initiated a Private Member's Bill to honour Mr. Alexander's contribution to Ontario. His bill was co-sponsored by both a Liberal and an NDP MPP. It was passed into law on November 28. From left are Scarborough-Rouge River MPP Bas Balkissoon, Marni Beal-Alexander, Ontario Black History Society President Rosemary Sadlier, Ted Arnott, and Hamilton East-Stoney Creek MPP Paul Miller.

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MPP Arnott thanks Minister for support for hospital

On October 29, Ted Arnott rose in the Legislature to thank the Minister of Health for her support for the Georgetown Hospital project. After he delivered the statement, the Minister personally crossed the floor to shake Mr. Arnott's hand and thank him for his remarks. The following is the text of Mr. Arnott's statement, taken from Hansard:

Mr. Ted Arnott: *I'm pleased that the Minister of Health is in the House to hear my statement today, because a year ago this month I was pleased to update the House on the progress of the Georgetown Hospital renovation project.*

As you'll recall, Mr. Speaker, just before the 2011 election, on August 31, the Minister of Health visited Georgetown to announce a provincial grant of up to \$2.6 million to support the building of a new emergency department at our local hospital, coinciding with the installation of a new CT scanner. This announcement followed many months of planning and effort on the part of hospital staff and volunteers, the town of Halton Hills mayor, council and staff, as well as my own efforts and those of my staff, to convince the government to support these needed hospital renovations to improve local health service in our community.

Last week I was pleased to inform the minister that our new emergency department opened earlier this month, on October 9. She'll be pleased to know that the first patient was triaged and registered in the new department at 7 a.m. sharp. I want to thank the hospital staff for all of their extra efforts to make the move to the new emergency department go so smoothly.

I'm informed that the next major milestone in the project is the installation and start-up of the new CT scanner. It is hoped that following the testing of the equipment and staff training, the hospital will be ready to start scanning patients the first week of December. It is anticipated that the entire project will be completed by the spring of 2014.

As I said I would do, I want to thank the Minister of Health for her support of the Georgetown Hospital project. At this time, I want to extend to her a public

invitation for her to visit Georgetown again, when, working together, we officially open the new, renovated Georgetown Hospital.

Fundraising efforts for both Georgetown Hospital and Groves Memorial Community Hospital are ongoing. For more information on how to support the hospital projects please visit:

www.georgetownhospitalfoundation.ca and www.grovesfoundation.com



GROVES HOSPITAL – Progress continues to be made on the development of a new Groves Memorial Community Hospital in Fergus. Groves recently received approval from the Ministry of Health to complete Stage 2 of the capital planning process for the new hospital. Mr. Arnott wants to continue to do everything he can to keep the project moving forward.

(Photo courtesy of the Wellington Advertiser)



GEORGETOWN HOSPITAL – Georgetown Hospital's new Emergency Room and CT Scanner are now up and running. Mr. Arnott worked hard to raise awareness of the project and the Provincial Government committed to a grant of up to \$2.6 million.

(Photo courtesy of the Georgetown Hospital Foundation)

WELLINGTON-HALTON HILLS MPP TED ARNOTT



WORKING TOGETHER – MP Michael Chong, Ted, and Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette discuss the Town's concerns about the CN/Metrolinx Kitchener-Waterloo Expansion Project, which will construct a new railroad track through the Town of Halton Hills.



RUN FOR HAITI – The Arnott family participated in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church's annual Race for the Children of Haiti event in Fergus on October 19. Proceeds from the 5km run help provide for orphan children at Sella House and provide for schooling for over 800 children in four primary schools. (Photo courtesy of the Wellington Advertiser)

Debt and deficit up; jobs continue to disappear

By Ted Arnott, MPP

Once again, I am compelled to report that Ontario's public finances continue to worsen and private sector job creation has stalled.

More red ink

The Government's Fall Economic Statement was presented to the Legislature on November 7th by Finance Minister Charles Sousa.

The Background Papers which accompanied the speech detailed the key numbers. They will be troubling to anyone concerned about the long term future of Ontario.

Provincial government spending continues to grow on a sharply upward trajectory. For 2013-14, the Liberals now plan to spend \$127.6 billion, up dramatically from \$122.6 billion last year.

This year's deficit (the Government's shortfall of spending in excess of revenue) is now expected to come in at \$11.7 billion. The deficit was \$9.2 billion last year.

Interest on the provincial debt is expected to be \$10.6 billion this year. This number will only go up when interest rates rise, as they inevitably, eventually will.

The net debt per capita (in effect, the amount that each Ontarian owes because of years of government overspending) now stands at \$20,099, up from \$18,796 just a year ago. Ten years ago, the net debt per capita was \$11,374.

The net debt of the Province of Ontario is expected to rise to \$272 billion by the end of March 2014. It has risen \$20 billion in the past year alone. Ten years ago, the net provincial debt was \$141 billion.

These trends are completely unsustainable. Ontario continues to need strong leadership to set priorities, eliminate waste, and take control of runaway government spending. Without this approach, the goal of a balanced budget will never be achieved.

(All of the above numbers are from the Government's 2013 Ontario

Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review. Visit: www.fin.gov.on.ca)

Disappointing jobs report

Early in January, Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey showed that Ontario had sustained a net loss of 39,000 jobs in December.

The Ontario unemployment rate in December 2013 was 7.9 percent, the same rate as that of December 2012.

We maintain that Ontario's unemployment rate has been higher than the national average every month for seven straight years. Too many young people cannot find work.

To create new jobs in Ontario, we need a new approach that emphasizes support for small business, new apprenticeships, productivity, innovation, tax relief and hydro price stability.

(Statistics Canada's monthly Labour Force survey is released on: www.statcan.gc.ca)

MPP Arnott stands up for laid off A.O. Smith workers

Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott is continuing to stand up for laid-off A.O. Smith workers. On November 27, he once again raised the issue with the Premier in Question Period. The following is the text of the debate, taken from Hansard:

Mr. Ted Arnott: *My question is for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, as you'll recall, almost eight months ago, A.O. Smith, the water heater manufacturer which has been our economic cornerstone in Fergus for over 100 years, announced it would be ending manufacturing there, putting 350 people out of work. These lost jobs are not a myth; they are real, and they are going to the United States.*

This was a devastating blow to our community, but we carry on, expecting the provincial government to do its part to establish a competitive economic climate and encourage the creation of new jobs.

This fall, our caucus was prepared to work with the government to clear the backlog of legislation before the House. But we had one request: that the government bring forward a jobs plan. My question to the Premier is simple: When will the government be tabling its jobs plan?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: *Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment.*

Hon. Eric Hoskins: *I appreciate that the member opposite has raised the issue of A.O. Smith. I know he has been working very hard with his community on this issue. He knows my own personal attachment, as well, with the company: My great-uncle worked there for 50 years, from the floor all the way up into management. There's nothing more important to this small community of Fergus than to be able to grow their economy and provide jobs for people going forward.*

We are working hard. The member opposite knows that there are measures in place, and the government has been active with a number of companies. We're hoping that there will be some good news in the foreseeable

future. Of course, for the employees that unfortunately lost their jobs, we have set up an action centre that provides them with job search support as well as retraining opportunities.

It's a community that's very important in southwestern Ontario. It's very important to this government, and as I mentioned, it's very important to me personally as well.

Mr. Ted Arnott: *As far back as 2005, I was ringing the alarm bells in this House about the competitiveness challenges faced by Ontario's industry and the need to develop an action plan to save manufacturing jobs. Mr. Speaker, they ignored us.*

Since then, we have lost more than 300,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs-38,000 since the Premier was sworn in last February. This number includes the 350 people who lost their jobs at A.O. Smith in Fergus. These job losses are more than just statistics. With the Christmas season soon to be upon us, we're talking about thousands of families who worry about their future, with good reason, and they see a provincial government without a clue of what to do. If the government can't come up with a jobs plan of their own, will they adopt ours?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: *Mr. Speaker, here's where I need to disagree with the member opposite. We have a jobs plan. The problem is that the PCs didn't support it. You didn't support it back in 2008 when we provided support to the auto sector. If it had gone your way, GM and Chrysler would have left the country.*

You didn't support us last year when we created the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund, which has created and retained more than 7,000 jobs in the last year alone. You voted against it.

You didn't support us for the youth jobs strategy, which we just heard a moment ago has resulted in more than 3,000 placements already, with a \$300-million investment over the next couple of years. We have a jobs plan; the problem is that you refused to support it.

WELLINGTON-HALTON HILLS MPP TED ARNOTT



HERITAGE BRIDGE – Ted Arnott, Councillor Joan Robson, MP Michael Chong, and Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette look at the progress being made on the restoration of the heritage bridge on 27th Sideroad north of Georgetown. The bridge dates back to the 1870s.

(Photo courtesy of the Independent and Free Press)



SALVATION ARMY – Ted Arnott and Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong help kick off the Salvation Army's annual Christmas Kettle Campaign in Acton on November 7.

(Photo courtesy of Major Sam Roberts)

MPP Arnott opposed to Gas Tax increase

A 5 to 10 percent increase in the provincial gasoline tax to fund transit in Toronto will not go over well with residents of Wellington-Halton Hills, says MPP Ted Arnott.

“People in Wellington-Halton Hills are not going to be happy if they have to pay a substantial increase in the gas tax to pay for Toronto’s public transit,” said Mr. Arnott.

Mr. Arnott’s comments came after the December 12 release of the Golden Report, which recommended raising the gasoline tax by 5 to 10 cents per litre. This would result in a tax increase from 14.7 cents to 19.7 to 24.7 cents per litre – a rise of as much as 68%.

In September, Anne Golden was appointed to head a new advisory panel to review Metrolinx’s investment strategy and come up with a series of recommendations to fund transit expansion in Toronto.

The report also suggested that an increase in the gasoline tax could be paired with a 0.5% increase in the HST.

“Most people in our Riding don’t use public transit in Toronto very often,” Mr. Arnott pointed out. “Why should they be expected to pay ever higher gas taxes for a service they hardly ever use?”

Mr. Arnott also argued that at the end of the day, an increase in the gas tax will do damage to a still uncertain Ontario economy.

“Many Ontario families are already struggling to make ends meet. How much more can Ontarians afford to pay?” he asked.



WATER TREATMENT – Halton Regional Councillor and 3rd Vice President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Clark Somerville, Centre Wellington Mayor Joanne Ross-Zuj, Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong, and Ted Arnott announce funding for the Elora Wastewater Treatment Plant and Clyde Street Pumping Station expansion project in Elora.

(Photo courtesy of the Wellington Advertiser)

Funding cuts hurt local municipalities

The cancellation of the Connecting Link Program and cuts to the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) without adequate consultation are a blow to local municipalities, says Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott.

The Connecting Link program has historically provided municipalities with a stable source of funding, covering up to 90% of the cost of necessary road and bridge repairs on provincial highways passing through built up areas. The program has been in place since the 1920s, when George Howard Ferguson was Premier of Ontario. In March 2013, the Government announced that it would be cancelled.

The Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund is the main source of transfer payments from the Province to municipalities. The program provided municipalities across Ontario with a total of \$575 million last year. That number is set to drop to \$500 million by 2016.

“The combined cost to local municipalities will be

significant, and puts upward pressure on property taxes,” Mr. Arnott noted.

For example, under the Connecting Link program, the Township of Centre Wellington would have been eligible to receive funding for up to 90% of the cost of the repair of the St. David St. bridge in Fergus. This project is expected to cost \$3.5 million.

Similarly, the Town of Halton Hills has \$9.4 million of planned construction work over the next 5 years on Connecting Link roadways.

“These decisions will put immense pressure on municipal finances,” said Mr. Arnott. “It is downloading by stealth.”

Mr. Arnott believes that these cuts are not fair to rural and small town municipalities. He has asked the Government to reconsider their decision to cancel the Connecting Link program and has also insisted on an explanation for the OMPF cuts.

New Holy Cross School remains priority for MPP Arnott

Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott is continuing to push for a new Holy Cross Catholic School in Georgetown.

Over the past year, Mr. Arnott has worked with Halton Catholic District School Board Trustee Mark Rowe to highlight the need for a new school and has raised the issue in the Legislature on multiple occasions. He has also both written and spoken to the Minister of Education to ensure that she is aware of the need.

Mr. Arnott has visited the school 3 times in the past year to see the need firsthand.

“Holy Cross Elementary School is in urgent need of replacement,” said Mr.

Arnott. “The school is in deteriorating condition and it’s time that this project started moving forward.”

Mr. Arnott pointed out that the Fall Economic Statement shows that the Government plans to spend more than \$2 billion on education infrastructure in this fiscal year alone.

“Surely, there is room in a budget of this size to build the Halton Catholic District School Board’s number one priority, a new Holy Cross Elementary School in Georgetown,” Mr. Arnott argued.

Holy Cross School was built in the late 1950s. A facility condition survey indicated that the building will require over \$5 million in repairs

over the next 8 years to maintain it in an acceptable condition. There is also insufficient room on the current site to expand the school to support anticipated population growth.

“Recently, the Halton Catholic Board submitted its Capital Priorities Business Case, confirming a new Holy Cross School as their number one priority,” Mr. Arnott told the Legislature in November. “The Board has done its part. The need has been established. Our students, present and future, deserve a decent learning environment, and I urge the Minister to approve funding for a new Holy Cross School without delay.”



COMMUNITY SAFETY ZONE IN MORRISTON – Mr. Arnott has worked closely with the Township of Puslinch to help improve highway safety in Morriston.

Economic study further strengthens case for Morriston bypass, says MPP Arnott

A new economic study initiated by the Township of Puslinch strengthens the case for the Highway 6 Morriston bypass, says Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott.

“I want to thank Mayor Dennis Lever, Township of Puslinch Council and staff, who took the lead to get this economic study done,” Mr. Arnott said. “The Provincial Government cannot ignore it.”

In a statement in the Ontario Legislature on December 11, Mr. Arnott stated that the economic study, led by Dr. Clarence Woudsma of the University of Waterloo, underlines the importance of moving forward with the much needed bypass.

“The current traffic logjams through Morriston are costing commuters tens of millions of dollars every year, and the commercial traffic costs are in the millions annually,” Mr. Arnott informed MPPs. “He also confirms this corridor is a key link in our trade with the United States.”

Mr. Arnott pointed out that the report found that the bypass would reduce costs significantly for the local business community.

The Government has budgeted \$2.2 billion for new highway construction this year alone. Mr. Arnott has long believed that the Highway 6 Morriston bypass project should be a priority, and has raised the need for it many times in the Ontario Legislature over several years.

“I urge the Minister of Transportation to agree to meet with Township officials and industry leaders early in the New Year to discuss the report and how we can work together to get the Morriston bypass on the five year plan,” Mr. Arnott concluded.

On February 19, 2012, the very first day the Legislature began its current session, Mr. Arnott tabled a Private Member’s Resolution calling upon the Government to put the Highway 6 Morriston bypass on the Ministry of Transportation’s Southern Highways Program. It is the very first Private Member’s Resolution on the Order Paper at Queen’s Park.



FLU SHOT – Ted receives the flu shot from Acton Pharma Plus Pharmacy Manager Lynn Lafrance. The program was initiated by the Hon. Elizabeth Witmer when she was Minister of Health. It provides free access to the flu shot to all Ontarians.

(Photo courtesy of Acton Rexall Pharma Plus)



4-H ONTARIO – Ted Arnott attends the Grand Opening of the new 4-H Ontario office in Rockwood on October 25. 4-H is a grass roots organization of volunteers working with youth to develop leadership and life skills to equip them with the tools to reach their full potential.

(Photo courtesy of the Wellington Advertiser)

Ice storm brought out the best in community

By Ted Arnott, MPP

Christmas 2013 is one that most of us will never forget.

The ice storm and the resulting hydro blackout meant frigid hardship for many of our residents, but in some ways it also brought out the very best of our communities.

All across the Province, neighbour helped neighbour, with whatever they needed. Families spent time together, without the background noise of modern electronics. And, most importantly, we showed our caring for one another.

Our local municipal Councillors and staff in some cases postponed or interrupted their own Christmas celebrations to provide the needed leadership.

Hydro One and local utility staff, like the staff of Centre Wellington Hydro and Halton Hills Hydro, were prepared to work 24/7 in the cold temperatures to restore power to their affected customers.

They were all magnificent, and deserve our sincere thanks for a job very well done.

And again, we thank everyone who was without power for their patience, perseverance and resourcefulness.

Now that the immediate crisis seems to be over, I believe we need to undertake a review of all that happened: what went right, as well as looking at the things that need to be done differently next time.

Accordingly, our Caucus has called upon the Government to appoint a Select Committee of the Ontario Legislature to review the Province's emergency preparedness protocols, to seek better communication and quicker responses in the future.

A Select Committee of the Legislature would include MPPs from all parties. The Committee would hold public hearings, invite expert testimony, and report back its findings and recommendations.

Postscript: The Town of Halton Hills, the Town of Erin, and the Township of Guelph/Eramosa are applying for disaster relief assistance from the provincial Government to help with the cost of the cleanup. Mr. Arnott wants to work with them to help in any way that he can.



NEW YEARS CELEBRATION – Ted and Lisa Arnott pose with Pat Salter at Ted's annual New Year event in Fergus.



SANTA CLAUS PARADE – Ted Arnott and Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong ride in the Erin Santa Claus Parade on November 22. *(Photo courtesy of Connie Cox)*

Government should listen to farmers

Agricultural issues remain an important priority for Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott.

“Farm families are the backbone of the rural Ontario economy,” said Mr. Arnott. “I want to continue to ensure that their voices are heard.”

Among the issues that farm organizations are saying must be addressed are the need to expand natural gas infrastructure to rural Ontario to ensure access to affordable energy, the need to preserve the traditional family farm, the importance of a predictable assessment and tax system, the need to preserve farmland, and the elimination of excessive Government regulations and red tape.

“I hope the Government will listen to the concerns that the farmers are raising,” said Mr. Arnott.