

Remarks

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Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

At

Ontario Museum Association Annual Conference

Nottawasga Inn Resort & Conference Centre

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Time: 9:00 a.m.

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you, Yves, for that kind introduction.

Good morning OMA delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of Premier Kathleen Wynne, Minister Michael Coteau and the Government of Ontario, I am delighted to open the Ontario Museum Association's Annual Conference.

The discussions on this year's theme -- Healthy Museums, Vibrant Communities -- shows that members of the museum community in Ontario are active, engaged and truly believe in the work they do.

Ontario's museums are where tourism, heritage and culture meet.

And I have to say – you are one of the most devoted and passionate groups of people.

I'm always impressed by your exceptional programs and exhibits and the inventive ways you find to reach out and engage members of the public - like the Ontario Museum Association's new Looking Ahead initiative, which I'm excited to learn more about today. It's yet another example of your ongoing commitment to Ontario's museums.

In today's changing world, Ontario's museums demonstrate their relevance by providing a unique and captivating experience.

Stimulating the imagination of the public with the ideas behind and around the artifacts they hold, museums enable connections to be made, imaginations to run wild and stories to be told and heard.

I want you to know how much the Ontario government recognizes and appreciates the economic impact that our museums have.

We see the value in strengthening Ontario's cultural organizations.

Since 2003, our government has invested over \$462 million to help museums and heritage organizations deliver innovative cultural programming.

This includes over \$390 million in operational funding and over \$71 million in capital funding.

Our investments have also helped communities across Ontario repair, renew and expand their cultural facilities through one-time major capital investments including: \$45 million for the Royal Ontario Museum, \$3.5 million for the Gardiner Museum, and \$5 million for the Guelph Museum

These investments have led to a stronger, more stable culture sector.

Our arts and cultural institutions help make Ontario a wonderful place to live.

They breathe life into our communities, helping them understand their own local stories and development and they're instrumental in making our province a world-class destination for cultural tourism.

Each year, Ontario's culture sector contributes more than \$22 billion to the provincial economy, draws millions of visitors to our region and gives us the opportunity to showcase the very best Ontario has to offer.

We have so much to be proud of here in Ontario.

And we look forward to more opportunities to showcase our province and draw visitors in the coming year, like commemorating 400 years of francophone presence in Ontario – a significant milestone - and welcoming the world as we host the 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Am Games.

These events present endless possibilities to showcase our province through cultural tourism.

And I have no doubt that the museum community will make the most of these upcoming opportunities.

We are so privileged to have all of you here today and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we keep our museums special places for generations to come.

I would also like to give a special thanks to Simcoe County's Cultural Network for graciously hosting today's event.

Thank you again for having me here and enjoy the rest of your day!