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Budget Brings Infrastructure Growth Amid Training Concerns: Dillon

Building Trades insist on legitimate training system to augment investments

(Toronto, ON) "The provincial Budget delivers on key infrastructure investments to support jobs in Ontario's construction industry based on the \$14.7 billion projected for 2019-20," said Patrick Dillon, Business Manager of the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario.

The announced infrastructure investments are part of a broader, 10-year province-wide commitment of \$144 billion. "Seeing continued funding for projects reinforces new opportunities for skills training that Ontario's construction workers are keen to embark on," observed Dillon, adding that "the Building Trades look forward to working with the government to promote apprenticeships in the skilled trades as a first-choice career path."

"Ontario's low unemployment rate (5.8 percent), GDP growth (2.2 percent), and job growth (132,000 new jobs) reflect a strong business climate of which Building Trades workers are a vital part," he noted. The Budget document shows a commitment to creating "dynamic labour markets and safe workplaces" with plans to develop a "new governance framework" to replace the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT).

"Thus far, indicators are that there has been a lack of consultation between the government and the legitimate apprenticeship trades training providers in Ontario. We intend to work with the government to improve the trades training system insofar as the government shares that intent. The Building Trades training providers will work with any and all interested parties, including government, consumers, employers, and owner-clients to further strengthen the most highly-trained, safest, and most productive construction workforce in North America," said Dillon, adding that "this involves establishing a robust trades regulation system that will effectively serve consumers, owner-clients, construction employers, tradespeople, and especially apprentices at a time of solid economic performance."

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