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**News Release - Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MPP Paul Vickers Pleased with 2025 Provincial Budget**

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**Date** Thu 2025-05-15 4:58 PM

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## **Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MPP Paul Vickers Pleased with 2025 Provincial Budget**

For Immediate Release

May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

TORONTO – Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MPP Paul Vickers says he is pleased with the Government's recently-released 2025 provincial budget.

The 2025 provincial budget, tabled in the legislature today by Ontario's Minister of Finance, the Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy, aims to protect Ontario's workers, economy, and communities in the face of changing Canada-U.S. relations, while making key investments in Ontario's communities and citizens.

"I think today's budget strikes the balance between what we need to invest in and do to protect and re-align our economy with the changing trade landscape, and what we need to do to invest in Ontario's communities and its people," noted MPP Vickers, the first-term MPP for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. "This budget recognizes the importance of Ontario's rural and small urban communities. It recognizes our needs and our contributions to Ontario's long-term success."

Some highlights of the budget include:

Creating Safer Streets:

- Expanding training capacity for future police officers in the Basic Constable Training program, so Ontario can train an additional 80 new officers per year, with a one-time additional intake of 300 officers to meet growing demand.

- Expanding HART Hubs, with \$550-million invested over the next four years to support 28 new HART Hubs across Ontario.

#### Economic Development:

- Committing \$10-million annually over the next two years to the Rural Ontario Development Fund, which provides grants to municipal and not-for-profit projects that lead to economic growth in rural communities.

#### Strengthening Healthcare:

- Reaffirming the government's commitment to supporting the construction or renovation of 50 hospitals, creating an additional 3,000 beds in the province.
- Investing an additional \$261-million in the *Learn and Stay Program* over the next four years, which gives tuition grants to nurses and other health professionals in return for their commitment to work in an underserved rural community post-graduation.

#### New Infrastructure Funding:

- \$33.3-billion in infrastructure spending this year alone, to build more highways, hospitals, public transportation, schools, and other core public assets.
- Expanding the *Connecting Links* program from \$30-million to \$45-million annually, to support municipalities that maintain roads that connect provincial highways. Many Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound communities with a provincial highway in their boundaries are eligible for funding through *Connecting Links*.

#### Ontario's Tariff Response:

- \$11-billion in support for Ontario's small businesses, through penalty-free tax deferrals, and reductions and rebates on WSIB premiums.
- A \$60-million investment in Ontario's communities and workers that are hardest-hit by recent tariffs, including \$20-million to retrain impacted workers and \$40-million to impact our hardest-hit communities through grants and other supports through the *Trade-Impacted Communities Program*.

Elsewhere across the province, the provincial budget outlined further commitments to the government's GO 2.0 strategy, a \$4.7-billion investment to refurbish and expand hydroelectric power generation capacity, and investments to build resiliency in Ontario's forestry sector.

The provincial legislature will soon commence debate on the budget bill as it advances through the legislative process.

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