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North Policy Institute Prepares for 2015 Federal Election

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THUNDER BAY – BUSINESS - Northern Policy Institute, along with The Mowat Centre and The Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity are embarking on a project to create a Federal Economic Agenda for Ontario in the lead up to the expected federal election in 2015. The project was introduced during the 2014 Ontario Economic Summit with the release of The Mowat Centre's discussion paper, *A Federal Economic Agenda for Ontario*.



According to the discussion paper, the purpose of the Federal Economic Agenda for Ontario is to: "define clearly the challenges and opportunities facing Ontario, develop a common vision and agenda on key economic issues, inform public dialogue, outline policy options that could be pursued by the federal government, and inform platform development by political parties in the lead up to the federal election."

The paper proposes five objectives that a federal policy agenda should support:

- Increased labour force participation
- Increased productivity
- Improved economic opportunity for all and reduced poverty
- Increased exports
- An improved federal fiscal framework that supports Ontario

Achieving these five goals will require the federal government to focus its attention on seven issues as identified in the discussion paper:

- Infrastructure
- Workforce development
- Immigration

- Trade and investment
- Innovation
- Federal transfers
- Targeted strategies for sectors and regions

“This is an important opportunity to give focus to the thinking of all federal parties about the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Ontario and indeed Northern Ontario,” says Northern Policy Institute President and CEO, Charles Cirtwill. “But it is also an important chance for all Ontarians, and all Canadians, to think strategically about how “one size fits all” policy approaches are limiting our growth and keeping all of us from reaching our maximum potential and making our maximum contribution to our collective well-being.”

In order to ensure that all the voices of Ontario are included, The Mowat Centre, Northern Policy Institute, and The Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity, will be collaborating with a broad range of Ontario’s key economic stakeholders to develop the Federal Economic Agenda for Ontario. Northern Policy Institute and its partners will engage with key stakeholders throughout Northern Ontario to collect comments, suggestions and ideas.

Participants will be invited to submit their ideas and feedback using the following methods:

1. A comment form will be included in a mail out.
2. An online comment form will be available on our website at www.northernpolicy.ca.
3. Email comments to info@northernpolicy.ca.
4. Mail comments to our mailing address at P.O. Box 10117, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6T6

The feedback, advice, and research that is collected in the coming months will be used to complete the Federal Economic Agenda for Ontario, with an intended release in the spring of 2015 in advance of the federal election.

“The challenges, opportunities, and options facing Ontario should be important to federal parties during the next year,” the discussion paper reads. “The Ontario economy is facing global forces that are producing a once-in-a-century transformation in the provincial economy. Ontario’s success will be crucial to the country’s prosperity in the decades ahead.”

To read the full discussion paper, *A Federal Economic Agenda for Ontario*, and provide feedback visit www.northernpolicy.ca.

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