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## **Ministers, infrastructure experts provide insight on merits of Ontario's \$130-billion infrastructure investment**

TORONTO (Marketwired: Dec. 3, 2015) – A panel discussion involving some of Ontario's keenest minds in infrastructure drew about 100 industry leaders on Tuesday as a ground-breaking independent research report was showcased.

The report, called "Investing in Ontario's Public Infrastructure: A Prosperity at Risk Perspective," uses a big data/big analytics approach to assess infrastructure impacts. Conducted by the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis (CANCEA), the report shows a \$1-billion investment in public infrastructure supports 85,000 job-years in Ontario over the next 30 years.

Because of the size of the infrastructure deficit in Ontario, the research showed that for every \$1 billion invested in infrastructure as part of Ontario's 10-year, \$130-billion plan, \$1.7 billion in provincial tax revenue and \$1.6 billion for federal coffers will be generated with good capital spending.

Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure Minister Brad Duguid told the crowd gathered at the University of Toronto's Hart House: "The findings of research into infrastructure investment are astounding: huge tax revenue returns, the creation of jobs and an improvement for quality of life. If that's not justification for the investment, I don't know what is."

Transportation Minister Steven Del Duca, the event's keynote speaker, said it was an exciting time for infrastructure in Ontario and he was happy to be part of the event.

“Now is the time for governments to be bold and for projects to get built,” Del Duca said. “We have to give people more transportation options – real, viable options – so that they’ll gladly leave their cars at home.

“Because from my perspective, we will only eliminate our infrastructure deficit when we successfully slay the understandable credibility deficit that exists, and we do this by getting shovels in the ground and deliver the service we promised to deliver.”

Education Minister Liz Sandals reminded the crowd that her ministry “is also a big player in infrastructure. We’ve invested \$13.4 billion in school infrastructure since 2003, including 755 new schools all over Ontario.”

Jan De Silva, president and CEO of the Toronto Region Board of Trade, moderated the panel of experts, which featured Barrie Mayor Jeff Lehman, John McKendrick of Infrastructure Ontario, Mark Romoff of the Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships, and the author of the CANCEA report, Paul Smetanin.

De Silva said the time is right for the GTA to reap the benefits of infrastructure investment.

“We’re very pleased that the provincial government is committing \$130 billion over 10 years in Ontario and the federal government is investing billions more. For the first time, we have political alignment at all three levels of government. The impetus for better transit has arrived,” De Silva said.

The event was hosted by the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) and the Ontario Construction Secretariat (OCS).

RCCAO executive director Andy Manahan and OCS CEO Sean Strickland were delighted with the crowd’s reaction to the panel and the findings of the report.

Smetanin, president and CEO of CANCEA, added: “We are very proud of this research. We hope it helps inform the broader discussion about how investment in our public infrastructure can be a catalyst to promote long-term prosperity.”

**Who is CANCEA?**

CANCEA is a state-of-the-art interdisciplinary research organization whose technology platform, Prosperity at Risk, uses agent-based modelling and systems approaches.

CANCEA has a long history of providing holistic and collaborative understanding of the short- and long-term risks and returns behind policy decisions and prosperity

**Who funded this research?**

The RCCAO has commissioned previous research from CANCEA and is pleased to be supported in this independent research report by the OCS.

**Contact Information:**

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