

2019 Ontario Pre-Budget Submission

Prepared for the Standing Committee on Finance

January 23, 2019

"In the current climate, creating and protecting jobs should be something that unites us all."

- Lieutenant Governor of Ontario,
Speech from the Throne, July 12, 2018

About ONN

The Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) is the independent nonprofit network for the 58,000 nonprofits and charities in Ontario, focused on policy, advocacy, and services to strengthen Ontario's nonprofit sector as a key pillar of our society and economy. ONN works to create a public policy environment that allows nonprofits and charities to thrive. We engage our network of diverse nonprofit organizations across Ontario to work together on issues affecting the sector, and channel the voices of our network to government, funders, and other stakeholders. Our work is guided by the vision that a strong nonprofit sector leads to thriving communities, and in turn, a dynamic province.

Executive Summary

Like the Ontario Government, ONN wants a prosperous province where people can earn a living, raise their families, and count on the vital services and programs they need. This requires a healthy economy and a regulatory framework that enables the private and nonprofit sectors to focus on their business.

Ontario's nonprofit sector plays a vital role as an economic driver, contributing \$50 billion to our province's GDP.¹ As a sector, Ontario nonprofits receive less than half of their revenues from governments, which means they can leverage public investments - via business activities, donations, and the contributions of volunteers - into significantly higher value in the services they deliver to Ontarians, all while creating jobs locally. Nonprofits also get Ontarians ready for work through the services we provide, like child care, workforce development services, and newcomer services. Nonprofit social enterprises provide avenues for entrepreneurs to innovate, while creating livelihoods for people and contributing to the economy. All this means that nonprofits are part of a strong economy for the future.

The Ontario nonprofit sector is ready to partner with government on making public services more efficient. Like you, we know that across-the-board cuts to investment streams can have unintended negative consequences on people's lives that are difficult to mitigate. Our service providers are deeply embedded in their communities, providing local employment, harnessing volunteers, and strengthening the fabric of community life. We share the objectives of offering modern, digital services for Ontarians, and supporting a thriving economy that creates good jobs for Ontarians today, and in the future. We are a partner to government in the effort to spend smarter and reinvent service delivery, while respecting public dollars.

We urge your government to build on the knowledge that nonprofits hold about the communities they serve and the many services they provide. Because they are governed by members of the constituencies they serve, nonprofits should be consulted and included in decisions that change the way services are delivered. The impact of major changes to the investment relationship through which governments deliver community services should be known in advance. The best way to assess impacts is to speak to the people most affected.

¹ Imagine Canada and Canadian Council on Social Development. ["The Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector in Canada: Regional Highlights of the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations."](#) p. vi.

Recommendations

Along with our overarching request for sector consultation, ONN calls on the Ontario Government to:

1. Reduce the regulatory burden on nonprofits and charities by listing all legislation and regulations that apply to them on a single website.
2. Expand the nonprofit sector's access to the Infrastructure Ontario Loans Program, a repayable loan system that can help nonprofits unlock more jobs and self-sufficiency.
3. Reduce red tape for volunteers by modernizing the police record check system across Ontario.
4. Reinstate funding at the 2018 Budget level (\$115 million) for the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), which provides critical investments in community services and facilities across this province – such as food banks, sports facilities, arts organizations and social service providers. OTF invested \$100 million directly in the community economy in 2016-2017, creating jobs and impacting over 750,000 Ontarians. Its capital grants invested \$22.4 million into nonprofits, First Nations, and small municipalities, building and maintaining community infrastructure while creating spin-off benefits, such as the purchasing of goods from local suppliers and the hiring of local contractors.
5. Work with the nonprofit sector to reduce red tape in transfer payment agreements so organizations can focus on delivering the vital programs people rely on and government can manage fewer agreements. We propose three specific measures:
 - a. Reduce the number of transfer payment agreements (TPAs) by introducing umbrella agreements for nonprofits that deliver more than one service on behalf of government. From our work on transfer payment reform, it is clear that thousands of nonprofits manage multiple agreements with multiple ministries. More efficiency gains can be made by reducing the number of *agreements*, rather than reducing the number of *organizations* engaged in service delivery.
 - b. Apply the lessons across government from Transfer Payment Administrative Modernization pilots that saved time and money for both government and nonprofits.
 - c. Reduce the number of IT systems used across government to manage TPAs – or enable them to interface so information can be collected once and used many times. There are over 40 systems used to manage TPAs and no way to share data uniformly across them. The status quo is duplicative and burdensome. Streamlining systems would lead to reduced burdens for both sectors, including reduced manual data entry, manual report preparation, and staff time used to collect reports and audit information from a funded nonprofit multiple times in a given year.

ONN would be pleased to work with the Ontario Government to advance these proposals in collaboration with the nonprofit sector.

1. Creating a web portal for legislation affecting nonprofits

“We all know that volunteers are the heart and soul of Ontario, and we’re incredibly privileged to live in a province where civic pride and volunteerism form the bedrock of our communities. It does contribute to such a beautiful social fabric and unites us across our vast geography and diverse backgrounds.”

- MPP Laurie Scott, speaking on International Volunteer Day, December 3, 2015²

Every nonprofit relies heavily on volunteers, and volunteers rely on nonprofits to provide a platform for their efforts. When a group of volunteers comes together, it’s not always easy to know what the rules are to run a nonprofit organization. Half the nonprofit sector has no paid staff and the majority of other nonprofits are very small. Yet, there are many rules that they have to abide by, such as health and safety, accessibility, employment standards, donations and taxes, corporate governance, and more.

Over time, the regulatory compliance burden has become heavy, but there is no one-stop shop where nonprofit leaders and employers can visit to understand their legal and regulatory obligations. ONN often hears from organizations that want to make sure they are compliant, but they do not know where to go. The Ontario Government has established a helpful model with its Small Business Access portal that provides everything from information about investment channels to training support to legal guidance.³ A significant feature of this site explains all the legal and regulatory requirements that apply to small businesses. We encourage the government to replicate this success with a mirror site for nonprofits.

² Scott, Laurie. “International Volunteer Day”. Edited Hansard. 41st Parl., 1st sess. No. 130. 215. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Web. December 3, 2015.

https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/house-documents/parliament-41/session-1/2015-12-03/hansard#P850_187152

³ Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. Small Business Access web portal. Updated: December 10, 2018. Published: October 16, 2017.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/small-business-access>

There is an opportunity to build on two current government sites: “Rules for Not-for-Profit and Charitable Corporations” site⁴ (which provides governance information) and the Grants Ontario portal⁵ (which provides information about funding opportunities across government). A single site with plain language legal compliance information, along with funding opportunities, would be easy to implement and would go a long way to reducing the burden on the nonprofit sector. This would enable organizations to spend less time on regulatory issues and more time on their programs and services. ONN would be pleased to convene the nonprofit sector to ensure the site design is most appropriate and efficient.

2. Expanding access to the Infrastructure Ontario Loans Program

“For the second consecutive year, IO was selected as P3 America’s Government Agency of the Year. The award recognizes IO’s innovative structuring and delivery of P3 deals and successful use of partnerships to deliver economic and social benefits to Ontario communities.”

- Linda Robinson, Chair, Board of Directors, Infrastructure Ontario Annual Report 2017-18)⁶

Owning their own buildings and equipment often allows nonprofits to offer more self-sustaining services and reduce their reliance on government grants as these assets can generate more earned income. Capital projects also create jobs in the construction industry. But nonprofits’ access to capital loans can be challenging as lenders are reluctant to lend to nonprofits with modest revenue streams and business models they may not understand.

With affordable borrowing rates, the Infrastructure Ontario Loans Program (IOLP) helps eligible public and nonprofit organizations to renovate buildings, buy land, or fix equipment. Gaining access to this form of alternative financing was significant for the parts of the nonprofit sector that became eligible after a policy change seven years ago.⁷ Some of the award-winning examples cited in Infrastructure Ontario’s own annual report include projects at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (national award for innovation and public-private partnerships), and Casey House (award for excellence in conservation).⁸

⁴ Ontario Ministry of Government and Community Services. *Rules for not-for-profit and charitable corporations*. Updated: June 27, 2018. Published: November 10, 2016.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/rules-not-profit-and-charitable-corporations>

⁵ Ontario Ministry of Government and Community Services. *Grants Ontario* web portal. Last Modified: December 17, 2018. <http://www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/>

⁶ Quoted in Ontario Infrastructure and Lands Corporation (Infrastructure Ontario). *Annual Report 2017-2018*. P. 4. <http://www.infrastructureontario.ca/Annual-Reports>

⁷ Eligibility was expanded to community health organizations, social services, and community-based sport and recreation organizations in 2011. ONN. “Press release: Expanded Infrastructure Ontario Loans Program for NFPs.” July 12, 2011.

https://theonn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/IO_press_release_expandedloans.pdf

⁸ Ontario Infrastructure and Lands Corporation (Infrastructure Ontario). *Annual Report 2017-2018*. P. 32. <http://www.infrastructureontario.ca/Annual-Reports/>

Expanding nonprofit access to these repayable loans is key to unlocking more jobs and self-sufficiency in the sector. Only some segments of the nonprofit sector (health and social community hubs, arts training groups, sports, and housing) are eligible for the IOLP. Other segments are not, including many arts and culture groups, employment services, and nonprofit social enterprises. Together, these sectors together employ a large proportion of the nonprofit workforce and expanded access would enable them to add more jobs through investment loans to scale up.

We ask that, subject to business case analysis, the IOLP be expanded to all types of nonprofits as a cost-neutral mechanism to invest in the job-creating potential of our sector. ONN would be pleased to work with your government to see this initiative realized.

3. Modernizing the police record check system for volunteers

“The process of getting a police record check for a one-time event is too onerous and too time consuming.”

- MPP Sylvia Jones, speaking to the Police Record Checks Reform Act, October 20, 2015⁹

“There is, however, a barrier to volunteering, and that is the financial cost to get the police record check that is so critical for protection. It is an important cost factor, considering many individuals volunteer for two or more organizations.”

- MPP Sylvia Jones, speaking to the Helping Volunteers Give Back Act (Private Member’s Bill 79), April 6, 2016¹⁰

Nonprofits commonly use police record checks (PRCs) as part of the process for screening for employment or volunteering. The Police Record Checks Reform Act, in effect November 2018, limits and standardizes information that can be disclosed in a record check and requires that individuals receive copies of their record check before disclosure to a third party, such as an employer. While ONN is pleased to have a legal framework around PRCs, there remain outstanding concerns that should be addressed through regulations.

⁹ Jones, Sylvia. “Police Record Checks Reform Act, 2015.” *Edited Hansard*. 41st Parl., 1st sess. No. 108. 2015. *Legislative Assembly of Ontario*. Web. October 20, 2015.
<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/house-documents/parliament-41/session-1/2015-10-20/hansard>

¹⁰ Jones, Sylvia. “National Volunteer Week” *Edited Hansard*. 41st Parl., 1st sess. No. 156. 2016. *Legislative Assembly of Ontario*. Web. April 6, 2016.
<https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/house-documents/parliament-41/session-1/2016-04-06/hansard>

As a burden reduction measure for volunteers and nonprofits, we ask that the Ontario Government harmonize and digitize the police record check system across Ontario. We propose Ontario-wide regulations to control the cost and administrative burden of police record checks and harmonize the process across jurisdictions to alleviate the regulatory burden nonprofits face as they try to support their volunteers and employees.

Volunteers pay too much and wait too long for their clearance. We have heard from nonprofits that some police services process checks in days, while others take 10 weeks or more. There is also significant variability between jurisdictions in terms of the fees charged to volunteers — half the police services in the province still charge prospective volunteers for this service, which can cost up to \$70. We would like to see consistency on this practice. The PRC system is often paper-based, taking up valuable police time and energy. Police forces and municipalities could save money if this process were digitized across the board and, in the process, reduce costs for volunteers.

We believe that volunteers are the heart of thriving communities and we encourage the Ontario Government to take measures to make it easier and quicker to volunteer.

4. Maintaining Ontario Trillium Foundation at 2018 Budget levels

"We all know that diet fads don't work. Similarly, instituting broad program cuts is not the answer."
- Peter Bethlenfalvy, President of the Treasury Board,
Speech to the Empire Club, November 7, 2018¹¹

Launched under the Bill Davis Government and expanded in 1999 under Premier Mike Harris, the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) provides critical investments in community services and facilities across this province – to organizations such as food banks, sports facilities, arts organizations and social service providers. It is the largest source of investment in Ontario that is open to all nonprofits and charities. OTF funds are distributed to nonprofits and charities operating in Ontario along with small municipalities and First Nations. These funds contribute to building strong communities, from Windsor to Perth and from Niagara to Dryden. Investment recipients go through a significant and transparent application and approvals process – with a final decision made by volunteers representing their communities - to ensure the funds are directed to organizations meeting their community's needs.

OTF funds strengthen local economies and community services. Not counting programs it administers for other ministries, OTF invested \$100 million directly in the community economy in 2016-2017. Through its Seed, Grow, and Collective Impact streams, OTF funded 469 projects in

¹¹ Bethlenfalvy, Peter. "The Challenge of Our Generation: Building a Modern, Sustainable Ontario Government." Remarks at The Empire Club. November 7, 2018.
https://news.ontario.ca/tbs/en/2018/11/minister-peter-bethlenfalvys-remarks-at-the-empire-club.html?utm_source=digest&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=p

2016-2017 that will impact over 750,000 Ontarians over three years. OTF's 203 capital grants in 2016-2017 invested \$22.4 million into nonprofits, First Nations, and small municipalities.¹²

OTF funding goes to job creation in local communities, hiring people to improve community health and well-being. These are meaningful jobs for both the employees and program participants. OTF's capital grants in particular also support spin-off benefits, such as the purchasing of goods from local suppliers and the hiring of local contractors.

ONN was concerned to learn that OTF's core budget for 2018-2019 was reduced by \$15 million (13 percent) near the end of its fiscal year. If OTF funding had kept pace with inflation, its 2000 allocation of \$100 million would have grown to over \$136 million by 2018. Even at \$115 million, OTF is already over-subscribed and cannot meet the needs of communities. Removing \$15 million from their budget on short notice will have a negative impact on Ontario's communities.

ONN requests that the government reinstate OTF's investment levels for 2019-2020 at \$115 million. OTF plays a critical role in building healthy, vibrant communities in Ontario and we urge you to maintain the Foundation's funding at current levels.

5. Red tape reduction in nonprofit funding agreements

"A complex array of prescriptive compliance-oriented reporting should be replaced by centralized reporting only on those things that matter most to the design, funding and delivery of results - namely, efficiency, productivity, and performance information."

- E&Y. *Managing Transformation: A Modernization Action Plan for Ontario*, 2018.¹³

By funding a variety of nonprofits, the Ontario Government supports choice in services for Ontario families. We all want to be able to choose where we send our child for daycare, who will care for our ageing parents, which recreational program to join, and which job training program is the best fit for us. Despite the importance of choice, we acknowledge the government's concerns that there are too many Transfer Payment Agreements (TPAs) with nonprofits. We recognize there are efficiencies to be realized in service integration and back-office shared services on the nonprofit side, as well as efficiencies in program administration on the government side. The government has a unique opportunity to drive efficiency in TPAs, and reduce red tape for nonprofits by reducing the number of agreements, focus reporting on performance rather than compliance, and modernize IT systems so reporting can be digitized and harmonized across programs.

¹² Ontario Trillium Foundation. *Annual Report 2016/2017*. P. 9.

<https://otf.ca/our-impact/annual-reports?redirected=1>

¹³ EY. *Managing Transformation: A Modernization Action Plan for Ontario*. Line-by-line review of Ontario Government expenditures 2002/03 to 2017/18. September 21, 2018. P. 21.

https://files.ontario.ca/ey_report_2018_en.pdf

When it comes to TPA modernization, nonprofits want the same outcome as government: to maximize the impact of public funds, while minimizing waste and inefficiency. Our sector can deliver services more efficiently than any other sector, bringing additional value to government investment through donations, earned income, and the value provided by the contributions of our volunteers. From our experience dealing with outdated funding practices, we also know where efficiencies can be found.

Nonprofits want to partner with government on regulatory reform so we too can be “open for business.”

Since the 2012 Open for Business process to which ONN submitted a series of proposals,¹⁴ ONN has been working with the Ontario Public Service to advance reductions in red tape for the ministries and nonprofits that together deliver services to Ontarians. ONN facilitated consultations with the nonprofit sector on the development of Transfer Payment Administrative Modernization (TPAM) Principles (2016); the Transfer Payment Accountability Directive (2017); and the Transfer Payment Operational Policy (2018).¹⁵

While these frameworks represent incremental improvement, there remains much work to be done. A big part of the problem is the tendency of ministries to operate in silos, without adequately considering that the end-user (whether nonprofit TPA recipient or individual client) should be able to access seamless and integrated services. Even with the recent Transfer Payment Operational Policy, there remain too many exceptions and loopholes that mean rules and regulations are not consistent across programs. Nonprofits still face too much red tape that takes time away from service delivery. ONN would be pleased to continue working with the Ontario Government on red tape reduction/TPA modernization for provincially-funded nonprofits.

The recent review that the Ontario Government commissioned from E&Y provided a welcome focus on the need to modernize TPAs. While the report should not be used to justify service delivery cuts in the name of efficiency, we do support the broad strokes of E&Y's recommendations: a framework for better public management of expenditures; leadership to strengthen cross-ministry harmonization; service delivery modernization; and a plan to achieve both short- and long-term performance/efficiency improvements. We have long been asking for better coordination of program streams across ministries and we were particularly pleased to see the report highlight the need for improved data and IT systems, as well as outcome-focused reporting, to help achieve this end.

Efforts to modernize TPAs should build on work done to date and the evidence about where the barriers are, and what would truly help to streamline administration.

¹⁴ See ONN website for more details: <https://theonn.ca/our-work/our-people/open-for-business/>

¹⁵ For background and links to these documents, please see ONN website: <https://theonn.ca/our-work/our-financing/government-investment-funding-reform/transfer-payment-administration-modernization/>

We have three concrete proposals for reducing red tape that will also save government money.

a. Reduce the number of transfer payment agreements by 5000+ through umbrella agreements

More efficiency gains can be made by focusing on reducing the number of *agreements*, rather than reducing the number of *organizations* engaged in service delivery. Setting aside individual and business transfer payment recipients, the TPA landscape includes a small number of large payments to the broader public sector (municipalities, schools, universities, colleges, and hospitals) and a large number of smaller payments to the nonprofit sector. Many nonprofits have multiple agreements with government and interface with more than one ministry. Inconsistent application processes, budget categories, and reporting requirements across programs and ministries means more red tape for nonprofits, less efficient services, and data inconsistencies and gaps. It is difficult to tell the story of what scarce public dollars are producing when ministries are bogged down with outdated IT systems, incomparable data across programs, and a preoccupation with compliance rather than performance.

If there is political will to break down silos between ministries, the number of agreements could be reduced by at least 14 percent -- without service or job reductions -- simply through umbrella agreements that cover more than one program. While there are over 31,000 TPAs in the nonprofit and broader public sectors, there are about 18,000 nonprofit *organizations* delivering services across 1000+ program areas. Only about 56 percent of transfer payments (or about 17,000 agreements) are for ongoing service delivery, while the remainder are for one-time projects or other payments. There are 5,000 Ontario nonprofits that currently have agreements with more than one provincial ministry.¹⁶

ONN was pleased when the Ontario Government recently introduced multi-project agreements with nonprofits as one of several ways to reduce the administrative burden for nonprofits and government ministries. These agreements, however, are voluntary for ministries to adopt and cannot span more than one ministry. We urge the Ontario Government to move more quickly on rolling out mandatory, streamlined multi-ministry umbrella TPAs.

b. Apply the lessons from the Transfer Payment Administrative Modernization (TPAM) pilots across government

The Human Services Demonstration (HSD) Project (2016-2017) focused on programs delivered across four ministries by 36 low-risk nonprofit organizations that, between them, were managing 57 agreements with government. These organizations had good track records in terms of meeting service and budgetary requirements.

¹⁶ Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS). "Proposed Operational Policy for Transfer Payment Administration: ONN Update." September 29, 2017. Slide deck. P. 3.

The project tested three modest TPAM process improvements: eliminating the first-quarter report, enabling the budget to roll over from one year to the next, and reduced manual data submission while maintaining accountability. With these small changes, the project found that:

- Ministries saved an estimated 4.4 hours per agreement, and nonprofits saved 45.3 hours, when rolling over the budget/agreement.
- Nonprofits reduced time spent producing quarterly reports by an average of 11.3 to 55.0 hours, depending on the ministry. This is staff time they would then be able to reinvest in front-line service delivery if first-quarter reports were eliminated.¹⁷

The Consolidated Audit and Reconciliation (CAR) pilot (2015- 2016 year-end) was tested by the Treasury Board Secretariat and approximately 30 nonprofits. Nonprofits usually have to pay for a separate audit report for each provincially-funded program on top of the audit they provide for their board of directors, at their own expense. This results in incremental administrative costs and the need to prepare various reports with different formats and levels of detail. One nonprofit estimated that the government's additional audit requirements cost them 100 staff hours, plus \$37,000 in external audit costs at year-end.¹⁸

- The CAR pilot allowed each of the approximately 30 participating nonprofits (all in good standing) to commission a single audit of all programs submitted to different ministries that ensured traceability of all funds, without having to duplicate reports. The pilot was a success from the nonprofit sector's perspective, but was not repeated. There has been no further movement in rolling out this cost- and time-saving red tape reduction initiative.

These pilot projects addressed several unnecessary burdens, but did not address the many other elements of a more ambitious TPA red tape reduction initiative. Cost savings to government and red tape reduction for nonprofits would be much greater if more significant modernization were applied to funding agreements across the board, such as:

- Global budgeting (i.e., fewer, larger budget categories instead of micro-budget categories that are not consistent across programs) that enables nonprofits to focus on performance management instead of duplicative compliance requirements;
- A common chart of accounts, including cross-government standards to guide indirect/administrative cost definitions & thresholds, which currently vary widely across ministries/programs;
- Increased access to proportional oversight, i.e., reduced reporting requirements, budget flexibility, and streamlined agreement renewal for funded nonprofits (this is currently guaranteed under the TPOP for "low risk" organizations offering "low risk" programs, which excludes many human services and leaves an onerous reporting burden on the rest).

¹⁷ Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS). "Human Services Demonstration Project: Pilot Results." Teleconferences with Participating Transfer Payment Recipients. January 19 & 25, 2017. Slide deck.

¹⁸ In 2016, the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres did their own internal study and documented how much staff time and extra auditing fees it was costing their centres to do funder-specific audit reports on top of their organizational audit. They concluded that "Elimination of additional program specific reporting at year end would save \$37,000 and more than 95 hours of OFIFC finance staff time," (email correspondence).

- A standardized risk assessment process across ministries to determine which organizations will be eligible for a reduced reporting burden; and
- Accelerated roll-out of “My Account” self-serve functionality beyond the one-time grants administered via the Grants Ontario portal to cover ongoing TPAs across ministries.

ONN would be pleased to work with the government to test and roll out these red tape reduction initiatives over the next four years.

c. Build the data for evidence-based efficiency initiatives by harmonizing IT systems used to manage TPAs across government

A key barrier working against a modernized TPA system is the result of highly fragmented systems used across government for managing TPAs, even within ministries. The recent E&Y report noted that “ample evidence exists to indicate that much of the data reporting and oversight currently required does not provide decision-makers with the right information at the right time.”¹⁹ To our knowledge, there are over 40 systems used to manage TPAs and no way to share data uniformly across them. A one-time investment in a common IT platform - or a way to enable them to interface efficiently - could result in ongoing savings to government by reducing manual data entry, manual report preparation, and staff time used to collect reports and audit information from a funded nonprofit multiple times in a given year. Harmonized IT systems are also necessary for multi-ministry umbrella agreements, a key measure for reducing the number of TPAs as noted above.

From ONN’s perspective, investment in IT is also essential if the Ontario Government wants to be able to assess the performance of its TPA relationships across programs and ministries. Improved data systems would provide a platform for better service performance measurement and learning. ONN is working with a coalition led by Powered by Data to find ways to securely share administrative data between governments and nonprofits to improve nonprofit programming. A common data platform across government would greatly enhance the evidence base on how well provincial programs are performing and roll out best practices from high-performing areas.

¹⁹ EY. *Managing Transformation: A Modernization Action Plan for Ontario*. Line-by-line review of Ontario Government expenditures 2002/03 to 2017/18. September 21, 2018. P. 21. https://files.ontario.ca/ey_report_2018_en.pdf

Conclusion and next Steps

In closing, we would like to reiterate our request that the government engage with nonprofits before making major changes to investment streams that affect them and the people they serve. The nonprofit sector can bring the voices of people who are affected by government decisions to help shape policy and budget decisions. It is critical to involve those affected in consultations prior to making these changes and we would be pleased to convene nonprofits to facilitate discussions.

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