

## NEWS RELEASE

*Ontario 360* is dedicated to developing and disseminating evidence-based public policies for Ontario’s long-term opportunity and prosperity

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For immediate release

TORONTO—The Province of Ontario is less than 80 days away from a provincial election. The different political parties are beginning to set out their respective policy commitments to address the province’s opportunities and challenges. This is a positive development. Ontarians deserve a substantive debate about the right mix of policies to position the province for broad-based opportunity and long-term prosperity.

Today the University of Toronto’s School of Public Policy and Governance (SPPG) officially launched a new, short-term initiative to support in this effort. *Ontario 360* is a purpose-built initiative to develop and disseminate evidence-based policy recommendations in the context of the pending Ontario election and post-election transition. It will be led and overseen by SPPG Director, Peter Loewen, and Instructor and Senior Fellow, Sean Speer, who have co-authored a short essay, [Open Source Policy for Ontario’s Future](#), to provide more information about *Ontario 360*’s mission and operations.

“The School of Public Policy and Governance is a national leader in policy analysis, training, and scholarship,” said Loewen, SPPG’s director. “*Ontario 360* builds on SPPG’s commitment to independent, non-partisan and evidence-based policy engagement with the policy community and broader public. We are hopeful that the various political parties will draw from our inventory of policy recommendations for their platforms and the province’s high-quality public servants will do the same as they prepare for post-election transition.”

*Ontario 360* will commission a diverse group of scholars and policy experts to put forward concrete policy recommendations in a number of key areas for the different political parties and ultimately the next Ontario government

### PROJECT PRINCIPALS

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irrespective of which one wins the election. These various policies will come in the form of both a series of “policy memos” as well as 30 short commentaries over 30 days starting on April 1. The overall output will be an inventory of “open source” policy recommendations on a wide range of topics relevant to all Ontarians – including taxes, climate change, early childhood education, transit, economic competitiveness, the opioid crisis, and so on.

Contributing experts have full discretion to independently put forward sound evidence-based policy recommendations in their respective fields. The only conditions are that their recommendations have a reasonable probability of broad-based political support and are actionable in the next, four-year mandate. Contributors will include: Tiff Macklem (Rotman School of Management) on economic competitiveness; Paul Boothe (Trillium Network for Advanced Manufacturing) on manufacturing; Trevor Tombe (University of Calgary) on climate change; Jennifer Robson (Carleton University) on post-secondary access; Linda White (University of Toronto) on early childhood education; Meredith Lilly (Carleton University) on trade and investment promotion; and many more. The full list of topics and authors will be released over the month of April.

“We have sought to establish an independent and credible platform for Canada’s leading policy thinkers to put forward clear and actionable policy recommendations for Ontario,” said *Ontario 360* project chair, Rudyard Griffiths. “We are aiming to elevate the level of policy debate, inform policy development among the various parties, and ultimately contribute to an evidence-based policy agenda for Ontario’s next government. *Ontario 360* is an exciting, new model for policy development and engagement.”

*Ontario 360* will be present on social media and in traditional media, host events and roundtables, and carry out other activities to share and disseminate its inventory of policy recommendations and to answer questions or address comments about them. Its purpose through these activities and functions is to support political actors and policymakers as they think through the right policies for Ontario as part of the election campaign and post-election transition. *Ontario 360* will expire on December 31, 2018, following the incoming government’s Speech from the Throne, its distribution of ministerial mandate letters, and early legislative and policy agenda.



“We see *Ontario 360*’s principal role as contributing to such a constructive and positive dialogue through the campaign and the post-election transition,” said Speer. “We look forward to the exchange and debate.”

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The [Ontario 360](#) project is a purpose-built initiative housed at the University of Toronto’s School of Public Policy and Governance. Its purpose is to develop and disseminate evidence-based public policy ideas in the context of the upcoming Ontario election and post-election transition. *Ontario 360* is independent, non-partisan, and evidence-based. It is a neutral platform for policy experts to put forward clear, actionable policy recommendations to address important public issues. Our advisory council, authors, and SPPG faculty, students, alumni, and supporters do not necessarily endorse or affirm the policy recommendations advanced by the different contributors.

