

For Immediate Release

Northern voices reflected in pan-Ontario vision

May 25, 2015, Thunder Bay, ON - Investing in the success of our aboriginal peoples, understanding and reflecting the diverse labour markets of Northern Ontario, committing to better Northern infrastructure, being a flexible and committed partner in pursuit of Northern opportunities; these are just some of the recommendations northerners put forward to guide future federal activity here in Northern Ontario.

The experts listened and have reflected these priorities in a new publication outlining a vision for what the federal government should do after the coming election, regardless of who wins.

The Mowat Centre, in partnership with Northern Policy Institute, today released their latest report “*A Federal Economic Agenda for Ontario*.” It sets out 33 recommendations across six key issue areas. The recommendations focus on policy steps the federal government can take to help Ontario grow.

In June 2014, The Mowat Centre convened a group of leaders from Ontario’s key industry and sector organizations to discuss what a federal agenda for Ontario might look like. Over the past six months, Northern Policy Institute worked to give northerners an opportunity to share their ideas with this group of leading experts. This involved the distribution and discussion of Mowat’s interim working paper.

The final Mowat paper, released online today, reflects much of the key feedback provided by northerners. The paper includes proposals for:

- Aboriginal controlled and culturally sensitive education.
- A more ambitious digital strategy including enhanced wireless infrastructure throughout Ontario.
- Enhanced collection of local labour market information and the return of the long form census.
- Flexible training programs available to more Ontarians and tied to this enhanced knowledge of local needs.
- Strengthened evaluation of and targeted expansion by FedNor in programs that have the greatest impact.
- Federal commitment to working with all stakeholders to develop, and fund, an actionable, inclusive plan for the Ring of Fire.

Says Charles Cirtwill, President of Northern Policy Institute: “Northerners took the opportunity we offered them to have their voices heard by the experts and the experts listened. The next step is for Northerners to take the opportunity offered by the upcoming election to have their voices heard by the federal parties.”

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Northern Policy Institute will make the Mowat paper available online to any northerner who wishes to use it and will be providing a copy to every northern candidate and federal party leader.

A Federal Economic Agenda for Ontario, can be found on the Northern Policy Institute website at www.northernpolicy.ca and The Mowat Centre website at www.mowatcentre.ca.

Media Interviews: Northern Policy Institute president and CEO, Charles Cirtwill, is available for comment. To arrange an interview, please contact:

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About Northern Policy Institute:

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern Communities. Our Operations are located in Thunder Bay and Sudbury. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.

About The Mowat Centre:

The Mowat Centre is an independent public policy think tank located at the School of Public Policy & Governance at the University of Toronto and Ontario's non-partisan, evidence-based voice on public policy.

We undertake collaborative applied policy research, propose innovative research-driven recommendations, and engage in public dialogue on Canada's most important national issues.

Our policy areas of expertise are intergovernmental economic and social policy, state transformation, energy policy and not-for-profit policy.

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