



Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

[www.eowc.org](http://www.eowc.org)

## NEWS RELEASE

### **EOWC advocates strongly for priorities at ROMA Conference**

Toronto, January 24, 2018 – Less than 10 days after its annual inaugural meeting and the adoption of its two major priorities, the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EOWC) spent the last three days in key meetings with Provincial officials during the 2018 Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference in Toronto.

Led by 2018 Chair Robin Jones and Vice-Chair Jennifer Murphy, the 13-member EOWC met with Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne, various Cabinet Ministers, the Ontario PC Party and the Ontario NDP Party to emphasize the importance of the Province's partnership in helping achieve and implement – this year – the two most important projects for rural Eastern Ontario, being:

- Building the ***EORN Cellular and Public Safety Broadband Network***, a \$299-million project funded by all three levels of government as well as the private sector, to close the many cellular network gaps in the region, boost mobile broadband service, and increase public safety for residents and first responders during emergencies.
- Implementing the ***Eastern Ontario Economic Development Strategy***, the first and only regional economic plan across the Province that would address Eastern Ontario's future economic development and growth needs, including workforce development and deployment, technology integration and innovation, and integrated, intelligent transportation.

The EOWC membership provided the business case and extolled the benefits of both projects – including the economic benefits – during meetings with:

- Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario
- Bill Mauro, Minister of Municipal Affairs
- Bob Chiarelli, Minister of Infrastructure
- Jeff Leal, Minister of Food, Agriculture and Rural Affairs
- Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
- Steven Del Duca, Minister of Economic Development and Growth
- Patrick Brown, Leader of the Ontario PC Party, and Caucus members
- Andrea Horwath, Leader of the Ontario NDP Party, and Caucus members

“The EOWC understands the importance of working together with the Province during this critical election year. For that reason, the EOWC has kept its focus simple and identified the two most important projects for Eastern Ontario – and our members were informed, organized, cohesive, collaborative and professional in each and every one of these important meetings,” said Chair Robin Jones.

“The benefits of both of these projects are long-lasting and long-reaching, bringing positive benefits to all sectors and Ministries, whether for economic development, health care delivery, rural affairs, infrastructure, employment, and growth,” added Vice-Chair Murphy. “If the Eastern Ontario region isn’t at the forefront of the latest technological advancements or economic development tools, it will fall behind.”

“Over the last three days, the EOWC made its voice heard – loud and clear – and our message was straightforward and united: let’s work together to make Eastern Ontario an even greater place to live and work, and a model for all of Ontario,” noted **Warden François St-Amour, of the United Counties of Prescott and Russell.**

Photos of the EOWC’s meetings are included with this press release. For more information about the EOWC, visit [www.eowc.org](http://www.eowc.org) or contact [info@eowc.org](mailto:info@eowc.org).

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