

Government Relations and Ethics Bulletin

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Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP

Ontario's Cabinet Shuffle

Introduction

After a difficult year marked by the eHealth issue, a growing deficit and a heated political debate over the new Harmonized Sales Tax, Premier Dalton McGuinty has sought to put a fresh new face on his second term Liberal government.

The Cabinet shuffle confirms the government's emphasis on economic development, job creation, green energy and education. In part, the new Liberal Cabinet is a demonstration of 'bench strength' that gives profile to several energetic, young and newer members of the government caucus.

The Cabinet shuffle announced on Monday brings into Cabinet four new MPPs, drops three others and shifts several portfolios among existing Ministers.

The following is a summary of some of the key moves. Attached as Appendix "A" is a complete list of the Ontario Cabinet.

Key Change

The highest profile move in this cabinet shuffle is MPP **Brad Duguid** (Scarborough-Centre) being promoted to the key post of Minister of Energy and Infrastructure. **Duguid** replaces interim

minister **Gerry Phillips** who assumed the portfolio temporarily when **George Smitherman** decided to run in the Toronto mayoralty race.

Duguid, previously Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, faces a significant and crucial challenge: delivering on the high expectations related to the *Green Energy Act* (passed under **George Smitherman**) to make Ontario a leader in green energy. Ontario's energy sector was dramatically reshaped by the *Green Energy Act* and Ontario's economic development and future manufacturing strengths have been tied to establishing the province as a North American centre for renewable energy.

Duguid will also very quickly have to make a decision on what to do with Ontario's aging nuclear reactors and how to spend the second half of the government's \$34 billion infrastructure plan funding. This key portfolio will no doubt continue to garner a great deal of attention over the coming months.

Other Moves

In addition to his role as Attorney General, **Chris Bentley** (London West) will also be responsible for aboriginal affairs. This added responsibility confirms that his work as Attorney General, in particular his handling of the legal aid

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boycott by Ontario criminal lawyers, has earned him the confidence of the Premier.

Another notable change is **Kathleen Wynne** (Don Valley West) who is being moved from Education to Transportation. **Wynne** has been seen as a potential future Liberal leader and this move has been characterized as surprising. With the number of large-scale projects falling within the transportation sector, **Wynne's** responsibilities will be significant.

Former agriculture minister, **Leona Dombrowsky** (Prince-Edward Hastings) will assume the education portfolio. Education continues to be a key area of concern for the government and Minister **Dombrowsky** will be tasked with carrying forward the government's plan for full-day learning for kindergarten students and further increase graduation rates.

Former transportation minister **Jim Bradley** (St. Catharines) will succeed **Jim Watson** (Ottawa West-Nepean) at Municipal Affairs and Housing. **Watson's** resignation in order to seek the mayoralty of Ottawa, following on the heels of Smitherman's departure, helped prompt the cabinet shuffle.

Also of note, **Michael Chan** (Markham-Unionville) is being moved from Citizenship and Immigration to Tourism and Culture. His main responsibilities will be to establish Regional Tourism Organizations across Ontario to effectively market Ontario's cultural diversity to tourists and to create new jobs in Ontario's cultural industries.

Key Stays

As expected, **Dwight Duncan** (Windsor) stays in his position as Minister of Finance and **John Wilkinson** (Perth-Wellington) remains as Minister of Revenue. One of the challenges of the upcoming months will be the July 1 implementation of the 13 per cent Harmonized Sales Tax which has not, to date, been popular with Ontario voters. Retaining **Wilkinson**

reflects the Premier's confidence in him as the front man for selling the HST to the Ontario voter.

Deb Matthews (London North Centre), recently made Minister of Health and Long Term Care will stay in this portfolio.

New Faces

There are four new members in **Premier McGuinty's** cabinet, reflecting the Premier's desire to put a fresh, youthful face on his government as election time nears. **Carol Mitchell** (Huron-Bruce), will become Minister of Agriculture. Mitchell was re-elected for her second term in 2007 and elected Chair of the Ontario Liberal Caucus in December 2007. In 2009 she was named parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health and Long Term Care.

MPP **Linda Jeffrey** (Brampton-Springdale) will become Minister of Natural Resources. Jeffrey, considered an up-and-coming MPP, was re-elected for her second term in 2007. As minister, she will be in charge of the implementation of the controversial endangered species act.

Sophia Aggelonitis (Hamilton Mountain) will become Minister of Consumer Services. Aggelonitis, first elected in 2007, is considered by many observers as a bright and capable new member of caucus. Prior to becoming Minister of Consumer Services she had been the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade (Small Business).

Recently elected, **Eric Hoskins** (St. Paul's) will become Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. **Hoskins**, who is still a practicing medical doctor, has spent more than a decade doing humanitarian work, winning an Order of Canada for his work with War Child Canada.

Who's Out

Former Natural Resources Minister **Donna Cansfield** (Etobicoke Centre), former Consumer Services Minister **Ted McMeekin** (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale), and former Culture Minister **Aileen Carroll** (Barrie) leave the Cabinet. All three are veteran politicians that are not likely to be seeking re-election in 2011.

For more information on the subject of this bulletin, please contact Daniel Brock.

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APPENDIX “A”

Ontario Cabinet

- Here are the 26 members of Premier McGuinty’s Ontario Cabinet:
- Leona Dombrowsky (Prince Edward-Hastings) Minister of Education
- Brad Duguid (Scarborough Centre) Minister of Energy and Infrastructure
- Chris Bentley (London West) remains Attorney General and becomes Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
- Monique Smith (Nipissing) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and she remains government house leader
- Jim Bradley (St. Catharines) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Sophia Aggelonitis (Hamilton Mountain) Minister of Consumer Services
- Michael Chan (Markham-Unionville) Minister of Culture
- Carol Mitchell (Huron Bruce) Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Linda Jeffrey (Brampton Springdale) Minister of Natural Resources
- Eric Hoskins (St. Paul’s) Minister of Citizenship and Immigration
- Kathleen Wynne (Don Valley West) Minister of Transportation
- John Milloy (Kitchener Centre) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities
- Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury) Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services
- Margaret Best (Scarborough-Guildwood) Minister of Health Promotion
- Laurel Broten (Etobicoke-Lakeshore) Minister of Children and Youth Services
- Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West) Minister of Economic Development and Trade
- Harinder Takhar (Mississauga-Erindale) Minister of Government Services
- John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands) Minister of the Environment
- Dwight Duncan (Windsor) Minister of Finance
- Peter Fonseca (Mississauga East-Cooksville) Minister of Labour
- Deb Matthews (London North Centre) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
- Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North) Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry
- Madeleine Meilleur (Ottawa-Vanier) Minister of Community and Social Services, Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs
- John Wilkinson (Perth-Wellington) Minister of Revenue
- Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt) Minister without portfolio and Minister Responsible for Seniors

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