



Premier of Ontario - Première ministre de l'Ontario

March 8, 2018

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, I am delighted to extend warm greetings to everyone marking International Women's Day. It is a privilege to join in celebrating the contributions of women to societies around the world.

As we take this opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made toward gender equality and on the work that we still have to do, I would like to reaffirm our government's commitment to ensuring that women and girls throughout Ontario have the opportunity to reach their full potential and succeed in whatever endeavour they pursue.

To ensure that progress continues to be made in advancing gender equality — and that we build on the steps we have taken to close the gender wage gap, encourage gender diversity on boards and in leadership positions, ensure that women are free from violence and harassment, and increase access to high-quality childcare — our government created Ontario's first standalone Ministry of the Status of Women in January 2017.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, I am very pleased to say that our government has just unveiled *Then Now Next: Ontario's Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment* — a three-year plan to increase gender equity, challenge bias and eliminate barriers women face at work, at home and in their communities. The strategy includes the introduction of standalone legislation to increase transparency in hiring processes and give women more information when negotiating compensation that is equal to their male peers, making Ontario the first province in Canada to do so. In addition, we recently launched *It's Never Okay: Ontario's Gender-Based Violence Strategy* — which is aimed at helping to end gender-based violence, supporting survivors and ending the cycle of violence.

I firmly believe that when we are all treated equally, we all benefit.

I offer my best wishes for a memorable and inspiring International Women's Day.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Wynne".

Kathleen Wynne
Premier