

Skills Ontario presents recommendations for the Ontario Apprenticeship System to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, during pre-budget consultations

To watch live feed of Public Hearings, link: <https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/video>

Skills Ontario Communications Contact: Emina Jakupović | ejakupovic@skillsontario.com

Toronto – “We’re seeking to expand our winning partnership with government, educational institutions and the private sector to create jobs for young people and address shortages in skilled trades and technology careers” said Ian Howcroft, CEO of Skills Ontario following a presentation to the Standing Committee on Finance & Economic Affairs. “With the announced closure of the Ontario College of Trades (OCOT), Skills Ontario is ready to take on an enhanced and expanded role to continue building momentum on promoting skilled trades, apprenticeships and technology career paths,” Howcroft added.

“We welcome the government’s commitment to being open for business. To achieve stronger economic growth, we need to address the persistent skills shortages that exist in the skilled trades and technologies”, said Howcroft. Skills gaps in Ontario cost an estimated \$24.3 billion in foregone GDP. Meanwhile, it is estimated that Ontario will face a shortage of 190,000 skilled workers by 2020, projected to rise to 560,000 by 2030. These shortages represent a significant constraint on growth for the Ontario economy and a significant opportunity to create rewarding careers for so many Ontarian youth. An efficient apprenticeship system is a key foundational element in a successful skills strategy.

Over the past 30 years, Skills Ontario has grown into the most impactful organization for promoting and encouraging youth to consider careers in the skilled trades and technologies. Skills Ontario’s programs connect education, experience, and employment changing millions of young minds -- 92% improved perception across 365,000+ youth annually -- about the quality of career offerings in skilled trades and technologies. We are pleased that the government is supporting the 2019 Skills Ontario and the Annual Skills Competitions and we are recommending an enhanced, long-term commitment to scale up efforts to promote skilled trades and technology career paths.

The value of this modest government commitment, which Skills Ontario has managed to increase by ten-fold through corporate and in-kind donations, is valued by students, business, families, educators, labour, and communities.

About Skills Ontario – Promoting skilled trades and technologies in Ontario since 1989
Over the last 30 years, Skills Ontario has been growing a portfolio of programs including in-school presentations reaching 125,000 students across Ontario, career exploration summer camps, Young Women’s and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Career Exploration Conferences, and hosting Canada’s largest skills competition which annually attracts 35,000 + spectators who cheerlead the 2,400+ competitors in 68+ trades and technology categories.