ITAC supports the launch of Government of Ontario's Data Strategy Consultations; continues to advocate for needed collaboration between ICT sector and government

Mississagua, ON (Feb. 5, 2019) – Today, the Government of Ontario announced that it will seek input into a provincial data strategy. Canada's national ICT industry advocate, the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC) has long called for Canada's (municipal, regional and federal) governments to develop a balanced framework to data governance, one that establishes a value framework for data, protects individual privacy, encourages sharing and collaboration, and incentivizes innovation.

"We are pleased that the Ontario Government is looking at ways to develop a strong data-digital economy in the province, and that it is seeking input," said Denise Shortt, acting president and CEO, ITAC. "The Ontario Government's data strategy needs to take into consideration that Ontario competes in a global digital marketplace. The data strategy should be leveraged to attract investment and allow Ontario firms to compete internationally; and Ontario's Government must find the right balance between unlocking the potential of data, but also ensuring the public trust that their data is being protected."

ITAC recommends a principles-based approach to developing a data-driven digital economy that maximizes the value of data for organizations and identifies priority areas for development. In July 2018, ITAC released a Data Strategy Report which provides considerations for Canadian governments when building a strategy, including: Artificial Intelligence (AI); 5G networks; trans-border data flows; quantum computing; digital identities; data ownership; protectionism; and security and privacy.

The Report also examines the important role of the government a regulator and convener that will help Ontario companies build partnerships, generate value and create intellectual property in the data economy.

"Data is an important resource for Ontario, and emerging technology companies will continue to disrupt traditional industries," added Shortt. "This means that the Ontario government – in collaboration with industry – must find the right balance to build data governance in a way that ensures privacy, unlocks data for economic prosperity, and breaks down jurisdictional silos."

The ICT industry is rapidly outpacing government policies and Canadians can't rely on policies that are outdated, and in some cases, designed for a pre-internet age. We must always consider what Ontario's Government can do to help position the country globally as a data-driven digital economy.

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About Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC)
As Canada's national ICT business association, the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC) champions the development of a robust and sustainable digital economy in Canada. A vital connection between business and

government, we provide our members with the advocacy, networking and professional development services that help them to thrive nationally and compete globally.

A prominent advocate for the expansion of Canada's innovative capacity, ITAC encourages technology adoption to capitalize on productivity and performance opportunities across all sectors. A member-driven not-for-profit, ITAC has served as the authoritative national voice of the $170 billion ICT industry for over 60 years. More than 36,000 Canadian ICT firms create and supply goods and services that contribute to a more productive, competitive, and innovative society. The ICT sector generates over one million jobs directly and indirectly and invests $4.9 billion annually in R&D, more than any other private sector performer.

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