

TECHNATION^{CA}

Industry Insider Newsletter

February 28, 2020

Ontario Pre-Budget Submission: TECHNATION encourages government to address key areas of digital government, digital economy and responsible tech

Ontario's future success is increasingly dependent on technology-fueled innovation. In our *2020 Pre-Budget Submission*, delivered to the Province of Ontario's Finance Minister on February 11, TECHNATION, submitted three themes, and several key recommendations that it wishes to see in *Budget 2020*: Digital Government, Digital Economy, and Responsible Technology.

In addition, Nevin French, Vice President, Policy, addressed member and industry concerns in person to Minister Rod Phillips and other MPPs on February 4th in Mississauga. His key message? Significantly more work and investments are needed for Ontario to truly have a modern, agile, service delivery-focused Digital Government. This includes continued modernizing information technology across all government departments, from Cloud to Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Cybersecurity.

Other key messages included:

- The Ontario government can help support our tech sector by simply being a smart, prudent customer of homegrown tech. We support the development of specific procurement vehicles for SMEs.
- Work closely with industry to develop and implement an annual refresh cycle for procurement processes, so there is constant improvement that will work better for both sides.
- For the Ontario Government to focus on Service Delivery for taxpayers, investments are needed in new technology. Taxpayers have clear expectations that government websites and applications are just as good – if not better – than those in the private sector. They should feature the same ease of use and must be just as – if not more - cyber-secure.
- Ontario has an amazing tech sector. National and provincial tech prosperity relies on a strong partnership between the private and public sectors. The best way the Government can build on this is to be a good, but prudent, customer. This has the potential for everyone to win: government, the tech industry and taxpayers.

It's important to remember that over the past few years, the Ontario digital economy has seen impressive growth including new investments from domestic and global players, with several of the largest tech companies in the world conducting research and development (R&D) in Ontario. Hundreds of small and medium-sized Ontario-based technology companies are creating jobs and bringing international investment and revenue into the province.

This is important because Ontario is viewed as a global leader in emerging areas such as AI, cybersecurity and robotics, all of which have, and will have, tremendous impact on individuals and organizations alike.

In its Submission, TECHNATION reiterated its message that the information, communications and technology (ICT) industry's ability to help the government meet its stated objectives, especially of improved service delivery to taxpayers and improving government efficiency.

TECHNATION also noted that it would welcome the opportunity to present its recommendations to the Ministry of Finance and the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

TECHNATION will attend the Budget lock-up and will produce a reaction later that day.

For a copy of the Pre-Budget Submission, or for more information, contact Nevin French at nfrench@technationcanada.ca.

