



Legislative Assembly

**JOHN YAKABUSKI, MPP**  
**Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke**

# **NEWS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Yakabuski Implores Minister to Help Struggling Forestry Business**

Queen's Park, Toronto - Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP, John Yakabuski, focused on the beleaguered area forest industry during his response to yesterday's Economic Statement in the Ontario Legislature today.

Yakabuski said the McGuinty Government's approach to forestry has been, "Let's continue to bring in more and more new regulation and exert more and more burden on people who work in the business of harvesting forest products. Let's make it more difficult for them to operate and compete in a global market where the regulatory process and the regulatory burden on people from other jurisdictions is so much less than it is in Ontario."

Yakabuski said he has personally asked Natural Resources Minister Donna Cansfield to try to help find solutions and stand as a partner rather than a barrier to the forest industry with her government's regulatory regime. In addition to the extreme regulatory burden brought in by the McGuinty government and the high cost of electricity, the announced closure of Smurfit-Stone in Portage-du-Fort, Quebec will have a disastrous impact on the forest industry in Renfrew County because that has been the prime market for their pulp and chips. Yakabuski pointed out that this affects one in seven jobs in the area.

In response to the \$500 million deficit announced by the province yesterday, Yakabuski said, "The McGuinty Liberals could have reined in their spending and avoided a deficit, but the money burnt a hole in their pocket. The McGuinty government chose to lavishly spend the massive surpluses it enjoyed over the past five years of economic boom, hiking program spending by 50 per cent and hiring thousands of new public sector employees in Toronto, instead of using that public wealth to strengthen our economy and make Ontario more competitive."

Yakabuski asks, "How could the McGuinty Liberals have possibly squandered the \$5.6 billion surplus, plus \$800 million from the reserve fund, in the seven months since their last economic statement? How did they spend more than \$6 billion in just seven months? Where did that taxpayers' money go? I can't help but think that if McGuinty had done a better job of managing our money in the good times, he would certainly be in a much better position to help the beleaguered forestry industry when they needed it most—and that would be right now."