



## FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE

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### Goals Set for Community Benefits – good jobs building transit

**TORONTO, ONT** – Today the Premier of Ontario announced a historic milestone – the goal of workforce inclusion and diversity on the Eglinton Crosstown transit project. In a Declaration signed by Metrolinx, project contractor Crosslinx, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, Infrastructure Ontario, the United Way and the Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN), all agreed to a program of training and hiring workers from historically disadvantaged communities and equity seeking groups. The intent is to have apprentices and journeypersons from these groups perform ten percent of the project trade hours. This will result in over 300 careers for young people who otherwise may not have found the way to enter the skilled trades workforce.

“A Community Benefits Agreement is powerful tool to overcome the historical underrepresentation of minorities and women in the construction industry. Jobs in the construction trades are good, well-paying jobs with benefits and a focus on safety. They can also be green jobs. Most importantly, workers have the opportunity to help build up their communities with the sense of pride, ownership and responsibility that engenders. The TCBN was established four years ago as a community-labour alliance to realize this goal. Now that we have this Declaration signed, we will work together with our partners to implement the community benefits program, monitor and evaluate its outcomes and replicate the model in future infrastructure builds.” said Rosemarie Powell, Executive Director of the TCBN.

Initiated by the Toronto & York Region Labour Council, the TCBN’s membership has grown to over sixty community and union organizations, and is supported by the United Way, Atkinson, Metcalf and Trillium Foundations. It is co-chaired by John Cartwright of the Labour Council and Lekan Olawoye of The 12 Community Alliance. Construction union training centres in Toronto have already created or are supporting programs to prepare young people from marginalized communities with the skills sets needed to access these jobs. The media event was held at the Tradelinx pre-apprenticeship training workshop of the Labour Education Centre.

And for the first time in North America, there is also a pipeline created for professional, administration, and technical jobs. To date more than forty new hires have been made by Crosslinx into these occupations. The Declaration can be found at <http://ow.ly/Madf306Uq9K>

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