**Backgrounder**

**GLEN MURRAY: TIME FOR NORTHERN ONTARIO’S OWN GOVERNMENT**

**The North Needs Its Own Voice**

A real voice for the North means it’s time for meaningful administrative devolution. As the next Ontario Liberal Premier, Glen Murray will take the steps for Northern Ontario to have that voice — its own government, representing its own interests.

The North is a unique, resource-rich region of Ontario. It must continue to diversify its economy to create opportunities for young people and stabilize employment.

Glen Murray wants the next Liberal government to see how we can devolve significant authority to the North over its own economy. This would mean a Northern regional government — or one for the Northeast and one for the Northwest if the people of the North themselves prefer.

**Northern Authority, Northern Responsibility**

Northern regional government, or governments, should have more authority over energy, infrastructure and natural resources.

Northerners would choose by referendum the kind of regional authority they want — a general northern government or a separate regional government in the Northeast and Northwest.

**How Northern Ontario Government Would Work**

No matter what Northerners choose, it should be based on three principles:

* + No duplication — if the North is deciding its own affairs, we don’t need a parallel provincial duplicated by a parallel layer or more bureaucracy.
	+ Respect for the Constitution — In certain areas, the province has the right to decide what happens within Ontario, North or South, and that would not change
	+ We need to respect the Constitutional and Treaty rights of First Nations and the Métis nation, and we’ll continue to seek partnerships in developing and protecting the North together.

**Northern Ontario Government Benefits Northerners — And Everyone**

Having its own government and voice would give Northerners a tax base from resource revenues, and more control of regional economic development and infrastructure funding.

It would allow Northerners to retain a share of provincial sales and excise taxes to support the devolved authorities.

Northern government can be cost-neutral to the government of Ontario.

The costs of services and administration devolved to a Northern authority would be covered by an assigned share of provincial revenues.

The new Northern government would work on a regional government model, by creating regional seats to be elected at the same time and on the same ballot as municipal elections in Ontario.

Northern government would be mandated to establish and bring forward Northern Development Plans — so Northerners could decide for themselves what’s best.

These plans would cover Northern integrated transportation and infrastructure, energy — including energy development and pricing — as well as resource strategy, business diversification, population, immigration and settlement.

**Time For Northern Ontario Renewal**

We need renewal … we need ideas.

That’s why a Premier Glen Murray Ontario government would engage the new Northern Policy Institute.

We’d appoint a working group to engage Northerners in developing the governance model and responsibilities of Northern government.

We need a 21st century way of doing this — we’ll use a similar online Wiki model — developed in Ontario — and already used successfully by the government of Iceland to write its new constitution.

Glen Murray was a successful Mayor of Winnipeg — the only Ontario Liberal Leadership candidate who has run a government. He also knows from his in Manitoba how far away the North can seem to Southern Ontarians.

It’s time to change that — it’s time to give the North the voice it deserves.

Support Glen Murray’s leadership campaign of ideas and action — built on renewal for Ontario families and our economy:

* Tax cuts for the middle class and small business
* No-money-down university or college tuition
* Cities and towns that work
* Smart government that listens — including a stronger voice for the North.

**For more information:**

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