June 11, 2015

OPEN LETTER

Premier Kathleen Wynne  
Legislative Building, Queen’s Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1  

Dear Premier Wynne:

I am writing you once again to encourage your government to consider leading the way on reform of the Canadian Senate.

My letter to you on this subject last year generated a disappointing generic “thank you for your letter” response. Based on your publicly indicated support for reform of the Senate, I sincerely hope your response this year will be more substantive and deal with an issue of considerable interest to Ontarians.

This matter has an added urgency, considering the heightened interest as a result of the recent release of the Auditor General’s report into Senate spending.

A Global News survey this week of Canada’s premiers found seven provinces representing more than 50 per cent of the population in favour of reforming the Senate. This is an opportunity for change – all it requires is someone to take the lead.

It strikes me that if you are sincere in terms of Senate reform, you should be prepared to raise this subject at the upcoming Council of the Federation meeting by announcing your government’s intention to deal with an issue that Canadians overwhelmingly want to see addressed.
As you know, any province has the ability to initiate the constitutional change process through passage of a constitutional amendment in their legislature.

Passage of the legislation would begin a process, with a three-year deadline, leading to, hopefully, adoption in the legislatures of at least six other provinces representing 50 per cent or more of Canada’s population.

You have previously acknowledged your support for reform and Ontario has a long history of putting Canada first. With your leadership, Ontario could again lead the way on bringing much-needed democratic legitimacy to a body that Canadians overwhelmingly want to see reformed.

Premier Wynne, once again, I urge you to seize the opportunity for Canada.

Regards,

[Signature]

Senator Bob Runciman