

The Honourable Michael Tibollo  
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport  
Hearst Block, 9th Floor  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2E1

Dear Minister Tibollo,

On behalf of the Ontario Museum Association, its members, and the more than 700 museums, galleries, and heritage sites across the province, I am writing to express concern about the substantial and unanticipated cost increases occurring in the Tourism-Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) program in Ontario.

Institutions across the province have shared that the drastic increases in prices in the TODS program have forced them to forego their participation. The average price increase for 2019 is 142%: An increase unanticipated in annual budgets. Several institutions have also expressed that in order to continue their participation in the TODS program, they will remove funds from their museum program and outreach budgets. TODS signs form an essential part of many museum's awareness and advertising efforts, particularly in the North and rural areas. In this way, the vital need to attract and orient tourists will take away from the quality of the tourism product and visitor experience available at the museum site. The institutions we represent need reasonable time in order to adjust to cost increases.

The OMA makes the following recommendations for the TODS program:

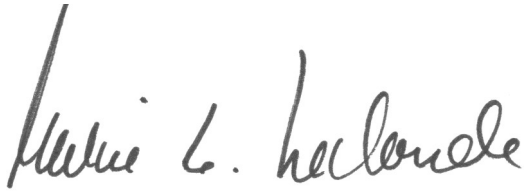
- **Appropriate Notice of Price Increases or Changes**
- **Staggered Increases**
  - Increasing prices as enhanced signs are installed
- **Pricing Model that considers annual operating budget**
  - Pricing model that acknowledges regional (Northern) needs
- **Grants or Exemptions for Non-Profits**

The Ontario Museum Association stands alongside Attractions Ontario and other tourism sector organizations in requesting review and amendments that support achievable and fair access to the TODS program. We recognise that enhancements to the signs, in the form of metal posts and improved materials, necessitate increased costs and will benefit tourist sites. However, an appropriate amount of notice was not given for TODS program participants to adjust to these increased costs.

We recommend a review of the TODS program that includes adequate and appropriate notice of staggered price increases, to reflect a commitment to an “Open for Business”, investment- and planning-friendly environment for all tourist sites in Ontario.

We look forward to the opportunity to share our recommendations for an effective TODS program with you. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Marie Lalonde

Executive Director

cc. The Honourable Jeff Yurek, Minister of Transportation  
Randy Nichols, General Manager, Canadian TODS Ltd.  
Troy Young, CEO, Attractions Ontario  
Beth Potter, President & CEO, Tourism Industry Association of Ontario

