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MPPs Munro and Hardeman meet with area farmers

York-Simcoe MPP Julia Munro and Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman, PC Critic for Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, met with farmers to hear about the challenges they are facing including red tape and to share the recently released PC white paper Respect for Rural Ontario.

?One of the challenges we continue to hear is that the government imposes policies and programs on rural Ontario and our agriculture industry without understanding what the impact will be,? said Hardeman. ?We believe that there needs to be a shift to respect the needs of rural Ontario and ensure consultation with people who will be affected by programs as they are designed.?

Hardeman pointed to the recently released PC white paper on Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Paths to Prosperity: Respect for Rural Ontario. This is the 12th in a series of discussion papers released by the Ontario PC Caucus.

?The Liberal government continues to ignore the needs of rural Ontario and the agriculture community. Only the Ontario PCs have a plan to build on the role of agriculture in a strong economy for all of us. I am pleased to be here today to listen to farmers and hear their reactions to our plan,? said Munro.

The white paper contains a number of initiatives to strengthen the agriculture industry and restore respect for rural Ontario including:

? Implement a 2% Ontario biodiesel mandate to reduce greenhouse gases, create new markets for waste products and create jobs.

? Create a regional food terminal to reduce the carbon footprint, create jobs and improve market access for farmers.

? Put both government and farmers risk management program premiums into a dedicated fund to manage risk and benefit farmers.

??Reduce red tape by implementing a one-window access to government, reviewing licences, permits and certificates to see which ones could be combined and which ones could be eliminated and reducing regulatory burden by at least 33%.

The white paper Respect for Rural Ontario is available at www.pccaucus.com.

?Over the past few years a divide has developed between rural Ontario and our urban focused government. We need to work together to address the challenges Ontario's farmers are facing, such as red tape so we can create an environment where our farmers can grow and succeed,? said Hardeman.