



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**Official Record of Debate**  
**(Hansard)**

**TOURISM**

**March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

**Mr. Ted Arnott (Waterloo-Wellington):** My question is for the Premier, and it concerns Ontario's tourism industry.

Today, I had the opportunity of attending and participating in the Tourism Federation of Ontario's annual forum. Last Thursday's budget did not do enough for our tourism industry. The tourism industry was asking for approximately \$30 million to be put towards the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corp. Our tourist industry is facing extraordinary challenges this year because of the high Canadian dollar and of course the pending US border passport issue.

I would ask the Premier, why was the budget not more helpful to Ontario's tourism industry?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty (Premier, Minister of Research and Innovation):** The honourable member opposite will surely understand that I'm about to disagree with him on this particular matter.

The single biggest community that stands as a draw for tourism in Ontario is the province's capital city, the city of Toronto. This city is in the midst of a cultural renaissance. That is coming about in part because our government is partnering with the community. In this budget, we've contributed \$49 million to support capital construction projects for Ontario's major cultural agencies and attractions. I'm talking about the Royal Ontario Museum, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Canadian Opera House, the National Ballet School, the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art.

If there's any large, urban centre in North America that is doing as much as we are in this particular city to ensure that we all benefit from a growing cultural renaissance, I am not aware of it. We are putting Toronto on the map when it come to culture in North America.