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Our Brilliant Mining Future

By Rick Bartolucci
Minister of Northern Development and Mines

It's been said that the best way to predict the future is to invent it.

We all recognize how crucial it is for future prosperity in Northern Ontario that we tap into the considerable ingenuity of those who live in the North.

Fortunately, one of the mainstays of the northern economy is a mineral industry that has repeatedly proven its enduring success during the past century of mining activity in Ontario.

As a lifelong northerner from a legendary mining region, and as Minister of Northern Development and Mines, I have a personal commitment to work with our government and the mineral industry to build opportunity and prosperity in Northern Ontario.

I am proud to say that our government has listened, and has once again stepped up to bat for the industry. In the 2006 Budget, we announced \$10-million to help launch the new Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation at Laurentian University in Sudbury.

The proposed centre will be a focal point for a cluster of mineral and related enterprises to help drive wealth creation in the province. It will take advantage of the university's established mining-related research programs, and focus on projects of high value and relevance for industry.

The Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation is the brainchild of a group that I am honoured to work with. In 2003, as Minister responsible for mining in Ontario, I launched the Ontario Mineral Industry Cluster Council, with members from academia, government and communities. Reporting directly to me, the council aims to create a larger, more globally competitive group of mineral and related enterprises to help drive wealth creation in Ontario.

We are working together to create the conditions that will promote the evolution of our mining cluster.

Laurentian University is a crucial partner in this venture. In 2004, the university adopted a mining vision to establish the national Centre for Excellence in Mining Innovation. Just a few months ago, Laurentian University President Judith Woodsworth publicly announced the university's plans to establish the centre on the Sudbury campus.

Support from industry is equally vital. I want to sincerely thank the industry partners, notably Inco Ltd., that have been quick to support the centre. I look forward to seeing this support grow.

I also want to commend the Ontario Mineral Industry Cluster Council, under the leadership of George Pirie and Warren Holmes, for driving the concept of a national centre of leading-edge research and development in Sudbury. In this, as in their other initiatives, they're doing an outstanding job.

I have absolute confidence that working together we can succeed. And I look forward to each step that helps us invent a brilliant future for Ontario's mineral sector.

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