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His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios of Canada comments on the proclamation of March as Hellenic Heritage Month

The month of March in each year has officially been proclaimed as Hellenic Heritage Month by the Government of Ontario.

On December 10, 2019, Bill 138, *Plan to Build Ontario Together Act, 2019*, received Royal Assent; included in this legislation was the *Hellenic Heritage Month Act, 2019* . The latter Act was informed by Bill 77, which was sponsored by Member of Provincial Parliament Effie J. Triantafilopoulos (Oakville North—Burlington).

Bill 77 was originally debated in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario on March 29, 2019, four days following the celebration of Greek Independence Day. In addition to Ms. Triantafilopoulos, the following MPPs participated and contributed to the debate – the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada extends its gratitude to each of them: Mr. Peter Tabuns, Mr. Michael Coteau, Hon. Michael A. Tibollo, Ms. Rima Berns-McGown, Mrs. Belinda Karahalios, Mr. Tom Rakocevic, Miss Kinga Surma, Mr. Aris Babikian.

The Archdiocese also extends its gratitude and thanksgiving to the Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, and to the Hon. Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance and sponsor of Bill 138 (who recently visited the Archdiocese headquarters in Toronto).

His Eminence Archbishop Sotirios, commenting on the proclamation of March as Hellenic Heritage Month, stated the following: “On behalf of all Greek people in Ontario, and indeed across Canada, I sincerely thank MPP Triantafilopoulos for her tireless efforts to see this worthy initiative to conclusion, as well as Messrs. Ford and Phillips for their executive leadership.” Continuing, the Archbishop said, “People of Hellenic descent have made significant contributions to Ontario’s communities; from business and sports, to public service and law, generations of Greek-Canadians have embodied a generous spirit of *philanthropia* making this province, and this peace-loving country, the best place to live. The annual celebration of Hellenic Heritage Month will ensure these contributions are never forgotten.”

Below is the official Preamble to the Hellenic Heritage Month Act:

The Hellenic Canadian community is a vibrant community in Ontario and continues to make significant contributions through its history, language, culture and work ethic.

March is a significant month for the Hellenic community and March 25 is celebrated each year as Greek Independence Day. Proclaiming March as Hellenic Heritage Month provides an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about the outstanding achievements and contributions of the Hellenic Canadians in the province.

— Source: gometropolis.org