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## **HIGH PROFILE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION COMMITTEES TO TACKLE ONTARIO'S SHARED AIR ISSUES**

*Health and Environmental Costs Top the Agenda*

TORONTO – The Ontario government has formed two new committees to help combat transboundary air pollution in Ontario, eastern Canada and the Northeast United States, Environment Minister Laurel Broten announced today.

The Executive Committee on Transboundary Air Pollution, chaired by Dr. Ted Boadway and the Advisory Committee on Transboundary Science, chaired by Dr. David Balsillie will give critical advice to the province on how to manage transboundary air pollution.

“These committees represent some of the best scientific, environmental and business minds in North America,” said Broten. “I am very pleased that these individuals have joined together and offered their vast and wide-ranging knowledge and experience to address the problem of transboundary air pollution. Their commitment to finding solutions to this critical health and environmental threat is commendable.”

The Executive Committee on Transboundary Air Pollution consists of prominent Canadian and American business, legal, scientific and environmental leaders and has a mandate to provide advice to the Minister of the Environment on regional transboundary air issues.

“I am honoured to chair a committee that puts the health of Ontarians and our shared environment first,” said Dr. Ted Boadway, former Executive Director of Health Policy at the Ontario Medical Association and executive committee chair. “Transboundary air pollution respects no borders and must be addressed now for our children and for future generations.”

The Advisory Committee on Transboundary Science will provide expert scientific and technical advice to the Ministry of the Environment. Its Canadian and U.S. membership will establish a list of priorities to help achieve the greatest health and environmental gains for Ontarians and the Northeast. The committee will also help to provide realistic and achievable targets for emission reductions and innovative strategies to achieve them.

“I am proud to work with such distinguished scientists to develop solutions to an important problem that affects us all,” said Dr. David Balsillie, advisory committee chair and Adjunct Professor at the University of Toronto. “We look forward to working with the Ministry of Environment to produce the scientific basis for the policies and programs that will improve the air quality in our shared airshed.”

More than half of the air pollution in Ontario is from U.S. sources. Transboundary air pollution from outside the province is responsible for over 2,700 premature deaths, almost 14,000 emergency room visits and more than \$5.2 billion in health and environmental damages each year. In 2005, Ontario had its worst year on record for smog advisories – 15 smog alerts covering 53 days.

“This government is dedicated to working with leaders in all sectors to find innovative solutions for the threat of air pollution,” Broten said. “I will continue to work alongside Ontario’s friends and neighbours on both sides of the border to fight a problem that affects this province and the entire Northeast.”

On June 26, 2006, Shared Air Summit 2006 will bring together environmental, health, government and corporate leaders from across North America to build a strategy on how to reduce the impacts of air pollution through innovation, in our own jurisdictions and across borders. For more information on this year’s event, please visit [www.sharedair.ca](http://www.sharedair.ca).

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