

Tory budget excites MPP and business owners

By JANET BAINE
Staff writer

The good news emanating from the Tory's provincial budget just keeps getting better, according to MPP Ted Chudleigh.

"It was a marvelous day, there was the feeling of election day yesterday (Tuesday, budget day)," the Halton North Tory MPP told members of the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce at a post-budget breakfast meeting Wednesday morning at Georgetown Golf and Country Club.

"We've said we would

balance the budget and I would be surprised if we don't do it before 1999," he said. "We said we would create 750,000 jobs and I would be surprised if we don't create one million jobs."

In his presentation Chudleigh outlined 10 ways his government has cut taxes in this budget. These include:

- cutting personal income taxes
- cutting the employer health tax on small businesses
- rebating land transfer tax for first time buyers of new homes
- giving employers a tax credit to hire co-op students

• rebate retail sales tax to farmers who purchase building materials

• giving film and TV producers a tax credit on labor costs

• exempting 1-800 and 1-888 numbers from sales tax

• scrapping the self employed health tax

• lowering the tax rate on racetrack wagers

• bringing corporate tax rules in line with federal regulations

Jennifer Alton, a member of Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce's political action committee, considers the budget

a positive one.

"I see it in a positive light. I think it's the start of a long road. I think it is going to be a tough couple years as people in everyday life will have to pay increased user fees," she said. To counter balance this, the plan to cut personal income tax is a good move, since it will give people the ability to choose what to do with that money.

The announcement to gradually eliminate the Employer Health Tax (EHT) on the first \$400,000 of the payroll by 1999 is also a good move, she said, since the tax is a big burden on small businesses. The

EHT has also deterred job creation and led to companies asking their employees to work overtime, rather than hiring more people, she added.

Mani Mitera, owner of Barrager's Cleaners, agrees.

He said that his is a labor intensive business and he will now have an additional \$5,000 as a result of the change.

"That's a substantial amount of money. I could buy a machine with that or improve the working conditions, or a multitude of other things," he said. Whatever he ends up doing with this money, it will be spent and stimulate the economy.



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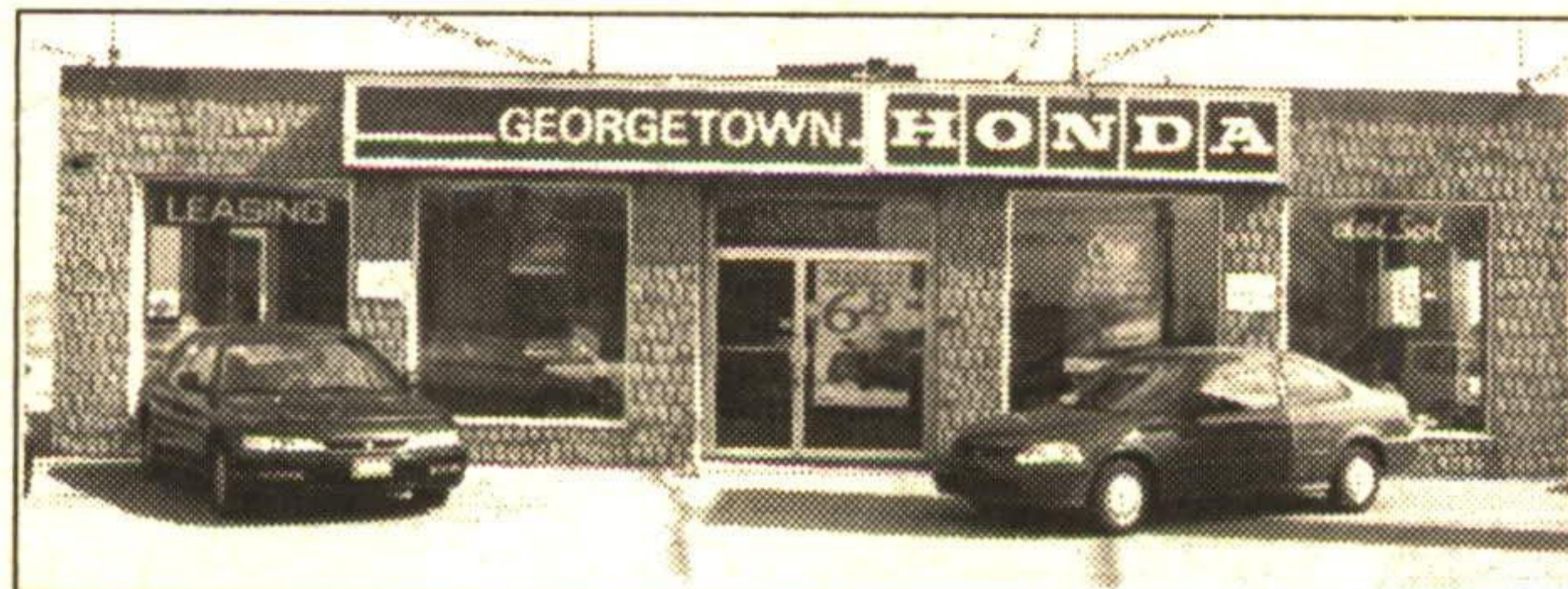


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