

The Premier
of Ontario

Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1A1

Le Premier ministre
de l'Ontario

Édifice de l'Assemblée législative
Queen's Park
Toronto (Ontario)
M7A 1A1



October 1, 2008

Mr. Peter Clutterbuck and Colleagues
25 in 5: Network for Poverty Reduction
c/o 355 Church Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5B 1Z8

Dear Mr. Clutterbuck and Colleagues:

Thank you for your letter regarding our province's poverty reduction strategy. I also appreciate your providing me with a copy of your report, *Poverty Watch Ontario*.

Our government is pleased that so many groups and individuals are joining in our plan to reduce poverty in Ontario. Our consultations were a catalyst for ideas like yours in communities across Ontario. Nearly 10,000 people have visited the www.growingstronger.ca website to learn more about our plan and we have received hundreds of submissions.

Be assured that our government will continue to do everything we can to help struggling families and to provide our children with opportunities for success. That is why, by the end of 2008, our government will deliver a comprehensive, long-term poverty reduction strategy, including targets and indicators. Our first focus of investment will be on child poverty, specifically ensuring that we break the cycle of poverty and give all of our children a chance at long-term success. Our poverty reduction strategy is not only the right thing to do, it is critical for our future economic success. Ontario needs all of its citizens to be strong if we want to compete in the global economy. We cannot afford to let anyone fall behind.

This strategy will build on the progress we have made. You may be aware that our government announced four important steps this year to help Ontarians reach their full potential while we work to complete our poverty reduction strategy. An important component of this initiative is our plan to invest \$135 million over three years to provide dental benefits to hard-working low-income families. Over and above that, we will invest an additional \$32 million over three years — more than double current annual funding — in the Student Nutrition Program, which provides nutritious meals and snacks to children

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and youth in schools and community settings across the province. We will also provide \$100 million to municipalities to repair existing social housing stock — helping nearly 10,000 Ontarians by fixing about 4,000 units. Finally, we have invested \$5 million in rent banks, which help save low-income tenants and their families from eviction by providing up to two months' rent payments directly to landlords. This brings our total investment in rent banks to over \$23 million, and will help build on the more than 13,000 evictions already prevented through this program.

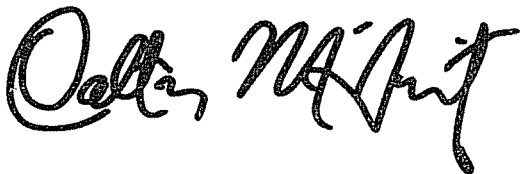
These investments are in addition to several other measures that already contribute to poverty reduction, including the Ontario Child Benefit, which will support nearly 1.3 million children under the age of 18 in low-income families with up to \$1,100 by 2011, and raising the hourly minimum wage to \$10.25 by 2010.

Your input will help the Cabinet Committee on Poverty Reduction develop a long-term plan to make things better for Ontarians of all ages and from all walks of life. Our government looks forward to taking the next steps to fight poverty in Ontario and we look forward to continuing to work with all our partners.

I have passed along a copy of your correspondence to my colleague the Honourable Deb Matthews, Chair of the Cabinet Committee on Poverty Reduction, for her information.

Thank you again for writing. Please accept my best wishes.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dalton McGuinty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dalton McGuinty
Premier

c: The Honourable Deb Matthews