

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

November 30, 2025

Dear Premier Ford,

Poverty is now affecting Ontarians who used to be financially secure, while those living in poverty have become poorer and are more likely to experience homelessness. We see this every day in our communities: encampments in parks, food banks stretched beyond capacity, and more households struggling to meet basic needs. The support systems designed decades ago are no longer aligned with today's realities:

- In 2023, 1.9 million Ontarians lived below the poverty line, unable to afford the necessities for a dignified life. This is up from 1.1 million in 2020.<sup>1</sup>
- Since 2020, the number of children in poverty in Ontario has more than doubled.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2024, approximately 82,000 Ontarians experienced homelessness, and the number of chronically homeless Ontarians has doubled since 2022.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2023, one in every five Ontarians experienced moderate or severe food insecurity, up from 12 per cent in 2020.<sup>4</sup>
- Many systemically marginalized groups are overrepresented in these and other poverty statistics because of enduring structural discrimination.

Addressing poverty requires a whole-of-government approach. This challenge affects seniors on fixed incomes, students, people with disabilities, families with children, newcomers, and workers in every part of the province. It also affects our municipalities, hospitals, schools, businesses, community groups, and service providers who know that thriving communities are built on a foundation of universal human dignity.

Evidence grounded in the lived experience of the people experiencing poverty and those that work alongside them every day is critical to shaping a meaningful and effective poverty reduction strategy. Nonprofits and municipalities are ready to work with your government to find innovative solutions that make sense across Ontario's diverse regions and groups. With provincial leadership, we can build a safety net that supports everyone.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 11-10-0135-01 Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type](#)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Donaldson, J., Wang, D., Escamilla, C., & Turner, A. (2025). *Municipalities under pressure: The human and financial cost of Ontario's homelessness crisis*. Association of Municipalities of Ontario. <https://www.amo.on.ca/sites/default/files/assets/DOCUMENTS/Reports/2025/2025-01-08-EndingChronicHomelessnessinOntario.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 13-10-0834-01 Food insecurity by economic family type](#)

Ontarians are honest, hard-working people, and those experiencing poverty are no different. But hard work no longer guarantees a roof over one's head and three meals a day. It is possible to reverse this trend. Your new poverty reduction strategy could mark a turning point.

### **A call for best practices**

Poverty is a policy choice. Ontario can lead by adopting a human rights-based approach to poverty reduction that recognizes poverty as a predictable outcome of our economic, social, and government systems. In line with this approach, the next poverty reduction strategy should embed best practices from across Canada:

1. An acknowledgement of the systemic causes of poverty and plans to address each of them.
2. Coordinated, dignified, adequate support for those living in poverty, primarily but not exclusively in the form of income security.
3. Transparent, measurable goals for reducing poverty and deep poverty, coupled with supporting indicators for housing, food insecurity, access to services, equity of outcomes, and more.
4. Inclusive governance structures that enable those with lived experience of poverty to have a meaningful say in the design and implementation of anti-poverty initiatives.

**Drawing inspiration from Canada's commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and in keeping with the government's responsibilities under the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, we recommend that Ontario's next poverty reduction strategy commit to reducing the poverty rate to no more than 7.5 per cent by 2030, representing a 50 per cent reduction over 2015 levels.**

Addressing poverty is not ideological. It is practical. When people have a stable base, they are better equipped to work, contribute, build a family and a community, and plan for the future.

Let's learn from the lessons of the past five years. Ontarians deserve a new poverty reduction strategy that shows the courage to admit what is broken and what it will take to fix it.

Respectfully,

A New Day Youth and Adult Services  
A Way Home: Working Together to End Youth Homelessness  
Accessible Housing Network  
Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights  
Advancement of Women Halton  
Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario  
AfroBiome Foods Incorporated  
AIDS Committee of Durham Region  
Albion Neighbourhood Services  
Allan Gardens Food Bank

Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians / l'Alliance pour l'Égalité des Aveugles du Canada  
Amadeusz  
Anglican Diocese of Toronto, Social Justice & Advocacy Committee  
Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario (AECEO)  
Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
Autism Alliance of Canada | Alliance canadienne de l'autisme  
Benlaw.ca  
Bethel Outreach Community Services  
Blessing Home To Alleviate Poverty  
Brockville and Area Food Bank  
Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force  
Building Roots  
Burlington Food Bank  
Caledon Community Services  
CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health)  
Canadian Centre for Housing Rights  
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives  
Canadian Drug Policy Coalition  
Case Community Services  
CAYR Community Connections  
CEE Centre for Young Black Professionals  
Central Food Network  
Centre For Black Development Options Canada  
Children's Aid Foundation of Canada  
Christie Ossington Neighbourhood Centre  
City for All Women Initiative (CAWI)  
CMHA WW  
College-Montrose Children's Place  
Colour of Poverty - Colour of Change  
Community Development Council Durham  
Community Development Halton  
Community Informative  
Community Living Ontario  
Compass Community Services  
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians  
County Food Hub  
CP Planning  
Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre  
Daily Bread Food Bank  
Davenport Perth Neighbourhood & Community Health Centre  
DBNC - Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre  
DeafBlind Ontario Services  
Disability Without Poverty  
Dominion House of Hope

Don Valley Community Legal Services  
DPCM  
East Wellington Community Services  
ECULINKS Etobicoke  
EFry Hope and Help for Women  
Eglinton St. George's United Church  
Elgin St. Thomas Coalition to End Poverty  
Equity Network  
Ethiopian Association in the GTA  
EveryMind Mental Health Services  
Fairlawn Avenue United Church  
Family and Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County  
Family Service Toronto  
Feed Halton  
FEED Niagara  
Feed Ontario  
FeedHalton  
Findhelp | 211  
Flemingdon Health Centre  
Food Banks Mississauga  
Future Ready Initiative - an organization of the Ismaili Council for Canada  
Gateway Residential and Community Support Services of Niagara  
Goodwill Industries, Ontario Great Lakes  
GTA Disability Coalition  
Guelph & Wellington Poverty Elimination Collaborative  
Guelph Community Health Centre  
Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition  
Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis  
Hamilton Jewish Family Services  
Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction  
Hamilton Social Work Action Committee  
HIV Legal Network/ Réseau juridique VIH  
Homeless Connect Toronto  
Hope House Guelph Community Food Centre  
Income Security Advocacy Centre  
Jack.org  
John Howard Society of Ontario  
Killaloe Community Resource Centre  
Lawrence Park Community Church  
LEADS Employment Services London Inc.  
Malvern Family Resource Centre  
March of Dimes Canada  
Margaret's Housing and Community Support Services  
Maytree

Metcalf Foundation  
Millions Missing Canada  
My brother's keeper Parkdale  
National Institute on Ageing  
National Right to Housing Network  
Neighborhood Developing Careers (NDC)  
Nishnawbe Homes  
North End Harvest Market  
North York Community House  
North York Harvest Food Bank  
Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre  
OCASI- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants  
ODSP Action Coalition  
Ontario Advocate Team  
Ontario Campaign 2000  
Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care  
Ontario Disability Coalition  
Ontario Municipal Social Service Association  
Ontario Nonprofit Network  
Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance  
open policy  
Otonabee-South Monaghan (OSM) Food Cupboard  
Ottawa Food Bank  
Our Place Peel  
Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre  
Parkdale Community Food Bank  
Parkdale Community Legal Services  
Parkdale Food Centre  
Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre  
Partners in Mission Food Bank  
Peel Poverty Action Group  
People for Education  
Pillar Nonprofit Network  
Planned Parenthood Toronto (Community Health Centre)  
Prosper Canada  
Ralph Thornton Community Centre  
REACH Niagara  
Red Door Family Shelter  
Retired Executives for Social Equity  
Right to Housing Toronto (R2HTO)  
Roots Community Food Centre  
Roots to Justice  
Rosedale United Church  
Second Harvest

Silent Voice Canada  
Social Development Centre Waterloo Region  
Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton  
Social Planning Council Oxford  
Social Planning Toronto  
Social Rights Advocacy Centre  
Social Services Network for the York Region (SSN)  
South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO)  
South East Grey Community Health Centre  
South Essex Community Council  
South Etobicoke Community Legal Services  
Stonehenge Therapeutic Community  
summerlunch+  
Tamarack Institute  
TGC.co  
The Campaign for Adequate Welfare and Disability Benefits - Hamilton Ont.  
The Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking  
The Engage Foundation  
The Guelph Outdoor School  
The Nightingale Centre for Grieving Children, Youth and Families  
The Rwandan Canadian Healing Centre  
The Sharing Place Food Centre  
The Sustainability Project Inc.  
The Table Community Food Centre  
Toronto & York Region Labour Council  
Toronto Drop-In Network  
Toronto Neighbourhood Centres  
Toward Common Ground  
Traverse Independence  
United Way East Ontario  
United Way Greater Toronto  
VCCS Employment Services Inc.  
Welcome Inn Community Centre of Hamilton  
Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy  
West Neighbourhood House  
West Scarborough Community Legal Services  
Willowdale Community Legal Services  
Willowdale in Neighbourly Community  
Willowdale in Neighbourly Community (WINC)  
Women's National Housing & Homelessness Network  
Workers' Action Centre  
Yonge Street Mission  
York Region Food Council  
York Region Food Network

YWCA Cambridge  
YWCA Hamilton  
YWCA Niagara Region  
YWCA ONTARIO  
YWCA Peterborough Haliburton  
YWCA Sudbury  
YWCA Toronto

cc: The Honourable Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services