

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 2020.¹
- Since 2020, the number of children in poverty in Ontario has more than doubled.²
- In 2024, approximately 82,000 Ontarians experienced homelessness, and the number of chronically homeless Ontarians has doubled since 2022.³
- In 2023, one in every five Ontarians experienced moderate or severe food insecurity, up from 12 per cent in 2020.⁴
- 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.

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

² Ibid.

³ 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>

⁴ 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
Flemington 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