

## **25 in 5 Response to Throne Speech**

Throne speech good start on Poverty Reduction: Decisive action on next steps critical

**TORONTO, November 29** - In the first Throne Speech of its mandate, the Ontario government sent an encouraging message that addressing poverty is an important part of the Provincial agenda.

Today the government confirmed its commitment to anti-poverty targets and indicators and to a multi-pronged agenda to tackle poverty in Ontario.

The government must now commit to province-wide consultations which include racialized communities, Aboriginal populations, people with disabilities, newcomers and other groups. This means a focused, six-month consultation to secure input while ensuring momentum.

We are also looking for a commitment that the strategy address the situation of low income individuals and families without children.

We welcome the creation of the Cabinet Committee to bring together ministries dealing with health, social assistance, education, labour, finance and others to ensure that a comprehensive plan is developed - a plan that addresses childcare, housing, good jobs at decent wages, and adequate income security systems.

And we applaud the government's action to implement its promise for a dental plan for the working poor. We see this as a solid down-payment on a plan that will help low-income people afford basic services and pursue employment choices that can make life better for themselves and their families.

In the short term, we need to hear more about the Cabinet committee's makeup and mandate and its consultation plan, and government must work with the community to set appropriate targets and indicators. Finally, and most importantly, it is critical that appropriate resources are dedicated to poverty reduction in the 2008 provincial budget.

The 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction is a multi-sectoral network comprised of 60 local and provincial organizations and individuals working on eliminating poverty in the province.

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