



ONTARIO ELECTION 2007: PARTY COMMITMENTS ON POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY (at 3 October 2007)

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Where do the parties stand on their commitment to a comprehensive plan to end poverty in Ontario?

A growing chorus of non-profits, community groups, and individuals is calling for the parties to commit to implementing a poverty reduction strategy that demonstrates a long-term vision to end poverty in Ontario.

Such a strategy should have measurable targets and timelines, an accountability structure, and should be developed in consultation with low-income people and policy experts.

Where do the parties stand?

Liberal Party	Progressive Conservatives	NDP	Green Party
The Liberals will build a comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy around the Ontario Child Benefit, and will work with partners to develop indicators and targets to measure and address child poverty. Firm targets will be introduced within one year.	The PCs have not made a commitment to a Poverty Reduction Strategy. But, at an all-party debate on poverty and disability in Toronto on Sept 18, the PC representative committed her party to instituting a poverty reduction strategy.	The Ontario NDP supports the creation of a comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy, targeted at reducing poverty by 25% in five years. They will meet with stakeholders to define targets and to develop a strategy to meet them.	The Green Party has said that it believes Ontario needs a Poverty Reduction Strategy. But, it has not explicitly committed to instituting one.
Other Commitments from the Parties:			
The 2007 Liberal Budget provides for a 2% increase to rates in November 2007.	PCs have made no commitments on social assistance rates.	NDP will increase rates to cover daily cost of living, and will allow an independent panel to establish OW and ODSP rates.	Greens will raise shelter rates to CMHC average local rents, set social assistance rates to the LICO for major urban centres, and index rates to inflation.
Reduce the clawback on the National Child Benefit Supplement by \$50 in 2011.	No commitments on clawback.	End clawback immediately.	End clawback.
Created the Ontario Child Benefit, which will provide up to \$1,100 per child to low-income families by 2011.	Maintain funding for the Ontario Child Benefit.	Maintain funding for the Ontario Child Benefit.	Maintain funding for the Ontario Child Benefit.
No commitments on minimum wage beyond raise to \$10.25 by 2010.	Set minimum wage through a schedule of increases determined after consultations with experts.	Increase minimum wage to \$10 / hour immediately, with increases matched to inflation.	Increase minimum wage until a person working 40 hours a week earns more than the poverty line, then index the minimum wage to inflation.
Create a long-term strategy for affordable housing, with a mix of non-profit and cooperative housing.	Give municipalities flexibility to use shelter funding for permanent housing for the homeless, and will leverage existing co-op assets to build new co-ops.	Provide 10,000 new rent supplements at \$4,450 / unit, build 7,000 affordable units annually, including at least 1,500 co-op units, build 750 supportive housing units, and 500 units for seniors.	Put future budget surpluses into a \$5 billion Long-Term Affordable Housing Investment Fund, using interest to leverage construction of affordable ownership housing.
Institute a new full-day pre-school program, with a financial commitment of \$300 million.	Continue to invest in early childhood education, building on the success of the early learning centres.	Provide an additional \$800 million for a seamless day of child care and junior and senior kindergarten for four and five year olds.	Provide \$300 million annually to child care, and will spend federally-designated \$97 million on childcare.
Provide \$45 million for dental services for low-income Ontario families. This is the first step in a Poverty Reduction Strategy.	No commitments on dental care for low-income people.	Provide \$100 million (initial year's cost) for a four-year program for dental services for low-income families, with system savings resulting from preventive care.	No commitments on dental care for low-income people.

Ask your local candidates where their party stands on a comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy.
For more information, go to www.incomesecurity.org/campaigns/current.html.

ISAC has created this document to assist advocacy groups, legal clinics, and others in their election and post-election work. During the election, use this document to question candidates about their parties' commitments.
(Note: We will be updating this document throughout the campaign.)