

MEDIA RELEASE

Party Commitments to Poverty Reduction Reach “Tipping Point”

TORONTO, October 2, 2007 – Anti-poverty activists woke up buoyed today by commitments generated by Monday night’s Vote Out Poverty event held at Massey Hall.

“We’ve reached the tipping point,” said Cindy Wilkey of the Income Security Advocacy Centre. “With firm commitments from two of the three major parties in this election campaign, implementation of a poverty reduction strategy in Ontario seems assured.”

Yesterday’s Vote Out Poverty event generated commitments from both the Liberals and the NDP on the creation of a targeted, comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy for Ontario.

The Liberals had previously committed to building a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy and to consult with partners on developing indicators and timelines. Yesterday’s announcement by the Liberals increased their commitment to include the creation of firm reduction targets within one year of taking office.

The NDP has also committed to meeting with low-income people, experts and advocates to define real targets and develop a strategy. But the NDP took the additional step of committing to reduce poverty by 25% in five years.

“We’re very excited by these new commitments,” added Wilkey. “And believe they demonstrate not only the parties’ dedication to making life better for low-income Ontarians, but also their recognition that the era of piecemeal and insufficient action on poverty is over. That door has closed.”

“We look forward to working with whichever party is elected on October 10 to reduce poverty in Ontario.”

The Income Security Advocacy Centre is a member of the 25-in-5 Network, which is calling on all parties during the election campaign to commit to a Poverty Reduction Strategy for Ontario, with a target of a 25% reduction in poverty within five years.