

URGENT BULLETIN

MEMBERS CALL TO ACTION

At the recent Ontario provincial council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada convention members in attendance approved resolution **ON.18.02 Immediate Implementation of *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change* for Ontarians with a Disability** (attached).

The resolution resolves that "the Ontario provincial council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada in 71st annual convention assembled urge the Ontario provincial government to immediately implement the recommendations of *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change* pertinent to Ontarians with a disability."

You can read or download *Income Security: A Road Map for Change* here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-roadmap-change>

Headlines In recent news include:

The Toronto Star: Ontario government scraps basic income pilot project, limits welfare increase to 1.5 per cent; and,

CTV News Toronto: PC government defends move to axe basic income pilot project.

These headlines inform us the Ontario government is not recognizing the significant public consultation and the Community Working Group's efforts in designing its report *Income Security: A Road Map for Change*.

A letter has been forwarded on behalf of all members; however, individual communication has the greater impact in compelling political change.

Premier Doug Ford needs to hear from each and everyone of our members that eliminating the income security pilot project and other recommendations within the report is not acceptable to each of us as Ontario citizens concerned for those at risk of homelessness.

Send a comment to the Premier and Minister McLeod in one of two ways:

1. **For the premier:** navigate to <https://www.ontario.ca/page/premier> then select the button 'Contact Us' and be sure to select yes where it asks if you require a response
2. **For Minister McLeod:** email lisa.macleodco@pc.ola.org

Send me a message at cwlresolutions@tbaytel.net to let me know if you receive a response. I will advise of the responses received in a future directive.

Email cwlresolutions@tbaytel.net to report all responses. The results are to be reported in a future directive.



ONTARIO PROVINCIAL COUNCIL
of
The Catholic Women's League of Canada

ON.18.02

Immediate Implementation of *Income Security*:
A Roadmap for Change for Ontarians with a
Disability

ON.18.02 Immediate Implementation of *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change* for Ontarians with a Disability

1 **Whereas,** *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change*, October 2017, presented a 10-year
2 roadmap for income security reform in Ontario including recommendations for
3 supporting people with disabilities through an amended, strengthened and distinct
4 Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) with an assured income approach
5 and redesigned rate structure; and
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7 **Whereas,** ODSP rates keep persons with a disability in Ontario in deep poverty when
8 compared with Canadian Low-Income Measures (LIM) because the rates:
9 • Were inadequate when established in 1997 as the primary source of income
10 for Ontarians with a disability; and
11 • Were frozen from 1997 to 2005; and
12 • Are revised at the discretion of the sitting provincial government; therefore, be
13 it
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15 **Resolved,** that the Ontario provincial council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada in
16 71st annual convention assembled urge the Ontario provincial government to
17 immediately implement the recommendations of *Income Security: A Roadmap*
18 *for Change* pertinent to Ontarians with a disability, and be it further
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20 **Resolved,** that this resolution be forwarded through the national executive to the other ten
21 provincial councils, urging them to become aware of this issue as it pertains to
22 their province/territory, and to act on it, as deemed necessary/prudent.
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ON.18.02 Immediate Implementation of *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change* for Ontarians with a Disability

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Brief

The report, *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change* October 2017, recommends a 10-year roadmap for income security reform in Ontario including support for Ontarians with disabilities through an amended, strengthened and distinct Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) with an assured income approach and redesigned rate structure. It examines inter-related issues in depth and proposes solutions that would achieve income adequacy for Ontarians with a disability and indeed for all Ontarians locked in poverty that would not rely on the discretion of the sitting government.

Internationally, the Low-Income Measure (LIM) is the most commonly used statistic to compare poverty. It is fixed at 50% of median adjusted household income, where "adjusted" indicates that household needs are taken into account. LIMs are calculated three times, using market income, before-tax income, and after-tax income. They do not require updating using an inflation index because they are calculated using an annual survey of household income (Canada, Statistics Canada, Table 3, March 12, 2018).

Using the Before Tax figures, the LIM in 1997 for a single person was \$13,890/year when the ODSP yearly income was established at \$11,160. In 2013, the LIM was established at \$23,939/year when the ODSP single yearly income was \$13,032; calculated from a household size of four (Canada, Statistics Canada, (SLID), March 12, 2018).

ODSP is governed by the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997 and administered by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services following the social assistance policy directives (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services Ontario).

ODSP was created in 1997 when the Ontario government changed its social assistance system to separate those unable to work due to disability from those viewed as able to work. The monthly maximum amounts, i.e., \$930/month for a single person, were established province-wide and frozen by the provincial government from 1997 to 2005. The latest 2% increase effective September 30, 2017 provides the single income recipient with \$1,151/month comprised of \$662 for basic needs (food, clothing, heat, hydro, transportation, hygienic needs, phone, cable, internet, household expenses, etc.) and \$489 for shelter, previously \$649 and \$479 respectively. There are additional provincial and federal benefits for those who qualify, i.e., GST/HST credit, the Ontario Trillium Benefit or the Canada Child Benefit.

When established in 1997, ODSP rates were inadequate as the primary means of income for Ontarians with a disability. Increases are fully at the discretion of the sitting provincial governments in terms of the amount, the timing and the calculations. Since 1997 and regardless of the method used to compare, there has been a significant loss of income. The 7-year freeze between 1997 and 2005 has had an extremely detrimental effect on ODSP recipients in terms of their income, health and welfare. Taking all these factors into account, full implementation of *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change* pertinent to Ontarians with a disability is paramount.

ON.18.02 Immediate Implementation of *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change* for Ontarians with a Disability

Works Cited

1. Statistics Canada. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75f0002m/2015002/tbl/tbl03-eng.htm>. Income Research Paper Series - Research Paper Low Income Lines, 2013-2014: Update, Table 3 - Low income measures by income concept, for household size of four persons 1976-2013. Web. 12 Mar 2018.
2. Statistics Canada. Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) - A 2008 Survey Overview, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75f0011x/2008001/5203392-eng.htm>. Web. 12 Mar 2018.
3. Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 25, Sched. B <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97o25b>. Web. 12 Mar 2018.
4. Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Ontario Disability Support Program Policy Directives <http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/en/mcscs/programs/social/odsp/>. Web. 12 Mar 2018.
5. *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change*, October 2017. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-roadmap-change>. 12 Mar 2018.
6. Income Security Advocacy Centre. Historical Basic Needs and Maximum Shelter benefits for single person on ODSP, Jan 2018.

ON.18.02 Immediate Implementation of *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change* for Ontarians with a Disability

Action Plan

1. Write to the premier, the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services and members of provincial parliament urging them:
 - To immediately implement the recommendations of *Income Security: A Roadmap for Change*, October 2017, for Ontarians with a disability
 - To become aware of the need for a more comprehensive approach in supporting Ontarians with a disability through an amended, strengthened and distinct disabled support program using an assured income approach and redesigned rate structure
2. Monitor the provincial government's response to the request of this resolution.