

Poverty plan lays foundation for action

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 4, 2008

TORONTO – Ontario will soon become a leader in poverty reduction in a plan that is not only crucial to the province’s economic recovery but is also the right thing to do, says the 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction.

“Today, Ontario is turning a corner on poverty,” says Pat Capponi of Voices from the Street. “We are closing a chapter on the days where government believed it could make political gains on the backs of the poor. This is the kind of foundation on which we can build real progress against poverty and achieve a better society for all Ontarians.”

The plan includes a commitment to reduce poverty in Ontario by 25% in the next five years and pledges required investments over the next five years to reach that goal.

“Today’s announcement signals an understanding that poverty reduction is smart economics,” says Jacquie Maund, Campaign 2000 Ontario Coordinator. “This plan will also prevent and reduce poverty over the long haul.”

“Thousands of Ontarians asked for a plan with targets, timelines and accountability. The government listened,” says 25 in 5 spokesperson Cindy Wilkey. “It was the right thing to do, at precisely the right time. It’ll be the shot in the arm that our economy needs.”

As the plan moves into implementation, the 25 in 5 coalition will focus on making sure that low-income Ontarians escape poverty and that progress is achieved quickly on affordable housing, early learning and child care, better education and training, and that social assistance is transformed into a program that advances the living standards of the people who are forced to rely on it.

“We expect poverty reduction to become a central feature in the next five provincial budgets – and the 25 in 5 Network will continue to hold our government to its promise to make this plan a reality,” says Peter Clutterbuck, executive director, Social Planning Network of Ontario.

25 in 5 consists of 350 organizations working to eliminate poverty.

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