



FAITH COMMUNITIES IN
ACTION AGAINST POVERTY

ISARC URGES ONTARIO GOVERNMENT TO REVERSE CUTS TO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

ISARC, the **Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition**, is calling on the Ontario provincial government to reconsider and reverse its cuts to social assistance.

We are adding our voice to the growing momentum to urge the provincial government to reverse its decision to cut social assistance by 1.5%. The \$150 million dollar savings is money that was directed to the most vulnerable in our province to provide basic necessities for themselves and their families. It will further destitute those already struggling to survive on incomes well below the poverty line.

Other planned regulation changes which are now being cut were designed to create more fairness in the system, more income for those with part-time employment, and better supports for those with special needs. These cuts will hurt the most vulnerable families and individuals in Ontario.

“We urge the Ontario government to reverse the cuts,” said Susan Eagle, ISARC Chair. “The proposed cuts ignore the substantial work done by the independent review panel that produced ***Income Security: Roadmap for Change***. That report provides a process of transforming social assistance to make it more effective and better able to serve families and individuals especially those in most dire need. We urge the government to continue that process.”

ISARC believes that the recommendations of the Income Security Roadmap review panel, which spent two years preparing its report, could achieve, if fully implemented, real income adequacy, and ensure that social assistance better addresses the needs of families and individuals, especially the Indigenous community.

“We are also dismayed by the decision to summarily end the basic income pilot program,” Susan Eagle said. “The human toll brought about by the sudden and harsh termination of the pilot program devastates families and individuals who signed on to the program in good faith, voluntarily leaving OW and ODSP to participate.”

ISARC is aware that basic income programs have long been supported by politicians of all parties and the pilot project was designed to explore a simpler, more economically viable way to provide assistance to families and individuals.

We need to ensure that social assistance provides a hand up and out of poverty rather than a bureaucratic bludgeon that keeps people in complete destitution before they become eligible for help and on social assistance indefinitely.

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