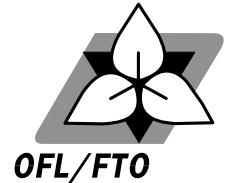




Safe & Affordable Housing



In 1995, the Harris Conservative Government cancelled Ontario's affordable housing program, cutting off access to housing for tens of thousands of Ontario families and creating a huge housing and homelessness crisis. All social housing was down-loaded to municipalities without the transfer of funds to fix up deteriorating existing stock. Women and children – often single mothers, the elderly, aboriginal women, women of colour, women with disabilities, new immigrants and youth – bear the brunt of this crisis. Studies show the links between poor housing, poor health and premature death. Affordability, supply and discrimination are at the root of this problem. Long waiting lists for affordable housing leave women and their children in substandard housing and in temporary shelters for months, and sometimes even years. Discriminatory landlords abuse their eviction powers in order to get higher rents.

Despite the harsh reality of over 600,000 Ontario households being in "core housing need" more than three years into the McGuinty Government's term in office, provincial housing spending is frozen at its lowest level in more than two decades. The McGuinty Liberals campaigned in the fall of 2003 on a promise to rebuild Ontario's public housing supply. Their commitments included 20,000 new housing units for needy families, giving priority to the development of affordable housing on Ontario government-owned lands; the creation of a new "Ontario Mortgage and Housing Partnership" to provide competitive financing rates for non-profit co-operative and commercial developers who want to build rental housing in Ontario.

Since 2003 the McGuinty Liberals:

- Built only 2,122 new homes as of October 2006, and another 2,161 are under construction.
- Delivered only 6,670 rent supplements as of September 2006.
- Finally started to flow \$392 million in federal money that was allocated by the federal government in 2005.
- Partially uploaded social housing spending in the 905 regions, leaving out Toronto and other municipalities in the rest of the province.

What Women Need

Women need a long-term solution to the housing crisis with new money devoted to building new housing and fixing up existing social housing. After years of Ontario Conservative governments that put a priority on tax cuts rather than investments in people and programs, we have fallen way behind. Funding is needed for up to 18,400 decent and affordable new units annually with a full range of housing options: funding conditional on non-discriminatory rental practices, effective rent control and tenant protection, aboriginal housing under aboriginal control and housing for northern and rural communities.

Ask Your Local Candidate:

- Is safe and affordable housing for women and children a priority for you?
- Will you and your party commit to a long-term strategy to address the housing crisis and commit to the funding of new housing supplies?
- Will you commit to bring back real rent control and stronger protections for renters?
- Will you agree to up-load the remaining social housing to the provincial government?

For more details go to the following websites:

Ontario Coalition for Social Justice - www.ocsj.ca
Step It Up Ontario - www.stepitupontario.ca