

Recent History of Efforts to Reduce Poverty in Ontario

- 2007 Toronto Star year-long emphasis on Poverty
- 2008 Ontario Government Cabinet Committee on Poverty Reduction
Global Financial Meltdown; Recession
- 2009 Ontario Government passed the Poverty Reduction Act of 2009
- 2010 Voices for a Just Society established
- 2011 Voices conducts interviews with MPPs and candidates
Poverty Free Ontario conducts campaign across province
- 2012 Social Assistance Review Report
Drummond Report
- 2013 Voices responds to the above reports
Province reviews its Poverty Reduction strategy – see submissions from 25in5 and ISAC

Current Situation

A three year decline in child poverty, due to Ontario Child Benefit, targeted tax credits, & increases in minimum wage

Province-wide poverty rate is approximately 13.6% (roughly 1 in 8)

413,000 people in Ontario using food banks, including 160,000 children

Those most at risk: Children; Lone Parents; Single Female Seniors; Recent Immigrants; Racial Minorities; People with Disabilities

Strategies to Reduce Poverty

- Affordable Housing
- Affordable Early Learning and Child Care
- Increase Minimum Wage and Index it to Inflation
- Increase Child Benefit
- Increase Social Assistance Benefits
- Pension Reform

Immediate Action

Respond to the Minimum Wage Advisory Panel – deadline is November 7

Go to www.labour.gov.on.ca, follow links to submission page

For background, see submissions from ISAC (www.incomesecurity.org) and 25in5 (www.25in5.ca)

Future Action

Voices establish a team to prepare background information and questions for candidates in preparation for the next provincial election

Good Sources

www.povertyfreeontario.ca Poverty Free Ontario – Pulling Poverty Out by the Roots

www.incomesecurity.org ISAC – Income Security Advocacy Centre

www.25in5.ca 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction

www.isarc.ca Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition – Faith Communities in Action Against Poverty

www.odspaction.ca O.D.S.P. Action Coalition (see their MPP Lobby Kit)