

August 2, 2018

Hon. Lisa MacLeod
Minister, Children, Community and Social Services
80 Grosvenor Street, 6th Floor, Hepburn Block
Toronto, ON M7A 1E9

Dear Minister MacLeod,

We are writing to you to express our disappointment upon learning of your government's announcement earlier this week to reduce the support rates to recipients of the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works from 3 per cent to 1.5 per cent come September 1st and October 1st, respectively.

For the more than 73,000 Ontarians who have an intellectual or developmental disability and who rely on ODSP to pay for desperately needed living expenses, the cut means the people affected will be receiving \$17.50 less than what was expected. The planned reduction will no doubt come with some difficult decisions for recipients, including food purchases, transportation and other basic needs. It is a decision that is punitive and comes on the backs of the province's most vulnerable citizens.

Community Living Ontario recognizes there are shortcomings with the current Social Assistance program, something the now-cancelled Basic Income Pilot Project was intended to explore. As such, we remain committed to working with your government on a program that is not only sustainable, but is effective, timely and promotes dignity, choice, and independence.

Our collective aim must be to lift people up and provide them with more jobs and more opportunities, and Community Living Ontario remains willing to meet with you and representatives from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to discuss how that can be achieved.

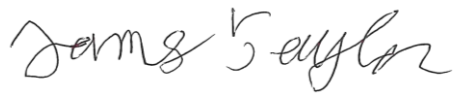
As part of our discussion, it would be important to examine the critical items announced in the March 2018 Budget that have now been repealed. Community Living Ontario supported many of the key reforms put forward by the previous government, including the full exemption of gifts and voluntary payments and the earnings exemption increase to \$400.

Also, we would be pleased if you accepted the earlier invitation to attend our annual conference on September 13th and 14th. There, you will have the opportunity to provide community agencies, families and self-advocates with the ministry's plan on how it intends to move forward and speak with our delegates, many of whom will be directly impacted.


We hope to meet with you in advance of our conference to discuss the issues we all face. Should you or your staff have any questions or wish to schedule a meeting, please do not hesitate in contacting Community Living Ontario's Chief Executive Officer Chris Beesley. He can be reached at 416-447-4348, ext. 227.

Again, we are eager to learn about your ministry's mandate for the developmental services sector and how, together, we can best support people who have an intellectual or developmental disability, families and the community agencies that assist them.

Yours sincerely,



James Taylor
President, Council of Community Living Ontario



Jim McNamara
President, Community Living Ontario

CC: Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Andrea Horwath, Leader of the Opposition
John Fraser, Leader of the Liberal Party
Mike Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party