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Ontario Passes Historic Poverty Reduction Act

The McGuinty Government achieves a milestone in the long-term fight against poverty. For the first time in Ontario, poverty reduction legislation will now ensure that successive governments remain focused on the fight against poverty.

The *Poverty Reduction Act 2009* was passed today with unanimous consent from all parties and will:

- Require successive governments to report annually on their initiatives to reduce poverty and on key indicators of opportunity such as income levels, education, health and housing
- Require Ontario to develop a new strategy at least every five years
- Mandate future governments to consult before developing these strategies, including consultation with those living in poverty
- Require future governments to set a specific poverty reduction target at least every five years

By requiring future Ontario governments to maintain an on-going commitment to the reduction of poverty, the McGuinty government is taking another step towards ensuring that everyone in Ontario has the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario's first-ever \$1.4 billion Poverty Reduction Strategy *Breaking the Cycle* sets a hard target of reducing the number of children living in poverty by 25 per cent over five years – that's 90,000 kids.
- Meeting the 25 in 5 target will require provincial investments, federal investments and a growing economy.
- The government is proposing to increase the Ontario Child Benefit this July from \$600 to a maximum of \$1,100 per child per year – two years ahead of schedule. The Ontario Child Benefit helps 1.3 million children by giving monthly support to their families.

"With our commitment as a government, the engaged support of countless Ontarians, and the power of this bill to ensure political accountability, Ontario is firmly positioning itself as a leader in poverty reduction."

– Deb Matthews
Minister of Children and Youth Services

"The passage of this bill is a real turning point for people living in poverty in Ontario. This government has listened to Ontarians in making this legislation, and it's stronger for it. People who were once shut out of the discussion have been heard and now they have a permanent place at the table."

– Pat Capponi
Voices from the Street, Author, and Member of 25 in 5

Further reading

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2009/05/ontario-passes-historic-poverty-reduction-act.html>

http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=fr&BillID=2147&detailPage=bills_detail_the_bill

<http://25in5.ca/>