June 23, 2008

Mayor Fred Eisenberger
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON
L8P 4Y5

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

The City of Toronto, as part of its commitment to social inclusion and poverty reduction, has been working with a broad range of community organizations, faith groups, and others through the 25 in 5: Network for Poverty Reduction. At a forum held at Queen’s Park April 14, 2008, the 25 in 5 Network released its founding declaration, which calls for a comprehensive plan that will reduce poverty levels in Ontario by 25% within five years and by 50% before 2018. The declaration lays out the principles of a poverty reduction strategy and outlines specific policy initiatives necessary to reduce poverty. These include sustaining employment, liveable incomes for all, and meeting social needs such as affordable housing, early learning and child care, public education and community services.

At its meeting of May 26 and 27, 2008, Toronto City Council endorsed the principles contained in the 25 in 5 Network’s founding declaration. At the request of Toronto City Council, we are pleased to attach a copy of the 25 in 5 Declaration for your consideration.

Yours truly,

David Miller
Mayor
City of Toronto

Councillor Joe Mihevc
Chair, Community Development and Recreation Committee

Encl.
We believe in a poverty-free Ontario. A place where everyone can live in dignity and enjoy a good standard of living.

**Action on Poverty Reduction. It starts with a plan.**

The Government of Ontario is committed to a Poverty Reduction Strategy with targets and measures to ensure “opportunity that is accessible to all.” (Throne Speech, November 2007)

We are asking our government for a plan to reduce Ontario poverty levels by 25% in 5 years and by 50% before 2018. We call this the ‘25-in-5’ campaign.

**Poverty reduction makes social and economic sense.** We believe in an inclusive Ontario, where everyone can develop their talents and contribute to thriving communities. We want a province with a vibrant economy and shared prosperity.

**Serious action on poverty reduction is possible.** The U.K. has reduced poverty by nearly 25% in the past 5 years. Quebec, as well as Newfoundland & Labrador, both have ambitious plans to tackle poverty. It’s Ontario’s turn.

**For Ontario, it starts with a plan.** A plan that brings hope and shared prosperity for all Ontarians: in urban neighbourhoods; in rural communities; among Aboriginal peoples; within racialized and newcomer communities; among single female parents; and persons with disabilities.

**We call on leadership from the Province, working with all orders of government.** Working with all sectors and especially with people living on low incomes, we can create opportunities, remove barriers and provide supports so that all Ontarians can live with dignity.

**Ontario’s poverty reduction plan should address three priorities:**

1. **Sustaining employment means assuring a living standard above poverty for any adult who works full time throughout the year. It means fair pay and stable working conditions for all Ontarians.**

2. **Livable incomes mean dignity for all Ontarians — including those unable to work.**

3. **Strong and supportive communities mean affordable housing, early learning and child care, public education and community programs that help people connect.**