Worship Fred Eisenberger  
Mayor of the City of Hamilton  
Hamilton City Centre  
230-77 James Street North  
Hamilton, Ontario  
L8R 2K3

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

This is in reply to your letter of December 11, 2008, concerning the recommendations that your committee adopted with respect to supports for seniors and other non-parent caregivers of children. I apologize for this delayed reply.

The Government of Canada recognizes the valuable contributions that caregivers make to ensure the well-being of loved ones in need of assistance due to age, health condition or disability. We also recognize that while caregiving can be rewarding, it can result in negative economic and non-economic consequences for caregivers.

You may be aware that grandparents providing care to their grandchildren are eligible for several federal tax credits, including the Infirm Dependent or Eligible Dependent Credit, the Medical Expenses Tax Credit for Other Dependents and the transfer of the unused portion of the Disability Tax Credit. Information on the eligibility criteria for these and other tax credits for caregivers can be obtained by calling the Canada Revenue Agency at 1-800-959-8281. In addition, for low-income seniors with caregiving responsibilities for a dependent child, child benefits such as the Universal Child Care Benefit and the Canada Child Tax Benefit are not treated as income when calculating eligibility for the Guaranteed Income Supplement.

Please be assured that departmental officials will continue to examine ways to better support caregivers, consistent with our commitment to help seniors, persons with disabilities and families.

Thank you for taking the time to share your views.

Yours sincerely,

The Hon. Diane Finley, P.C., M.P.

Canada
December 11, 2008

Ref. No. C08025-ECS-8

The Honourable Diane Finley
Minister of Human Resources and Social Development
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Subject: Income Security Programs for Seniors Acting as Non-Parental Caregivers

Dear Madame Minister:

Please be advised that Hamilton City Council approved Item 8 of the Emergency & Community Services Committee Report 08-016; more specifically recommendation (b), as shown below:

8. **Ontario Works Temporary Care Allowance (ECS08023(a)) (City Wide) (Item 8.1)**

   (a) That the Mayor correspond with the Ministers of Community and Social Services and Child and Youth Services requesting that existing programs to support non-parental caregivers in their care of children be reviewed and to subsequently establish services that adequately support those children who are living with non-parental caregivers.

   (b) That the Mayor correspond with the Minister of Human Resources and Social Development Canada, requesting that existing income security programs for seniors, such as the Guaranteed Income Supplement, be amended to support seniors who have taken responsibility as caregivers for children and are raising them as dependent children.

   (c) That City of Hamilton’s Ontario Works Administrator be directed to review and revise local eligibility standards for Ontario Works Temporary Care Assistance; based upon all aspects of the
individual child's circumstances, but is to no longer use legal custody as the disqualifying factor when determining eligibility.

We respectfully request your timely consideration with respect to this matter.

Sincerely,

Fred Eisenberger
Mayor

FE/sp

cc: J. Priel, General Manager, Community Services Department
    G. Hendry, Director, Employment and Income Support Branch